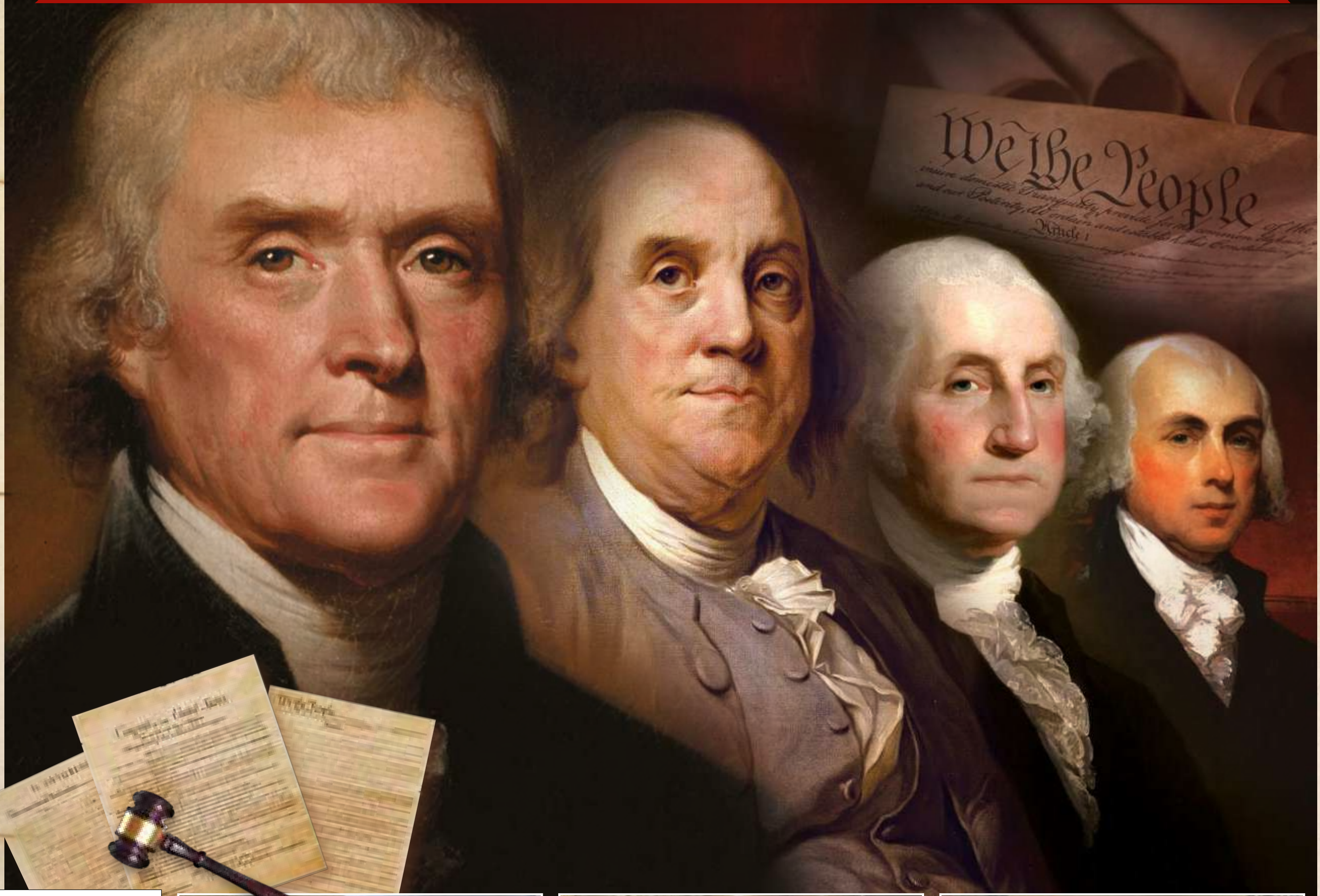
ALL ABOUT HISTORY

FOUNDING FATHERS

DISCOVER THE FASCINATING STORIES OF THE MEN WHO MADE AMERICA



Digital Edition

FUTURE

FOURTH EDITION

HAMILTON · WASHINGTON · JEFFERSON · FRANKLIN · MADISON

Welcome to FOUNDING FATHERS

From the American Revolution to the Constitution and beyond, the Founding Fathers were instrumental in the birth and evolution of the United States of America as we know it today. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton – all names associated with defining moments in the history of America. But they were far from alone. In the Book of the Founding Fathers we'll examine the key moments and figures from the War of Independence, discover the stories of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution, and meet the men and women behind the genesis of the United States. We also look at the legacy of the Founding Fathers – from their many achievements to the controversies and failures that surrounded their actions – and uncover some of history's forgotten Founders. Enjoy!

FUTURE

FOUNDING FATHERS

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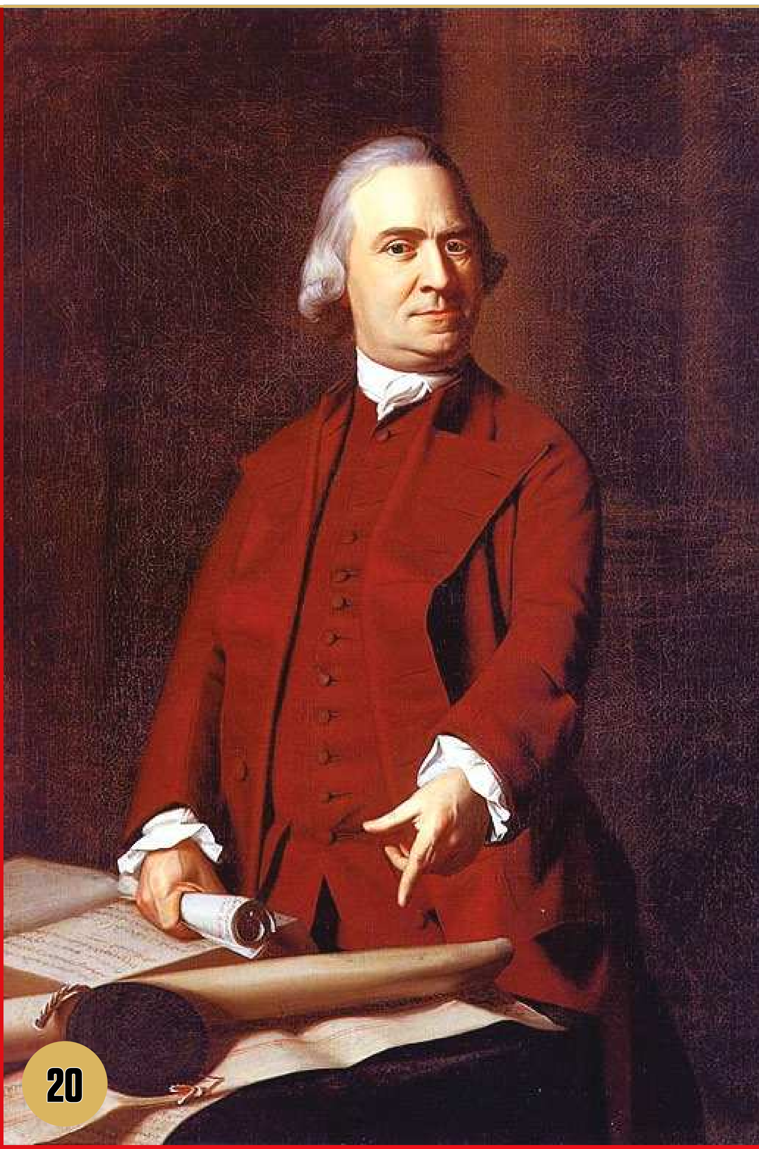

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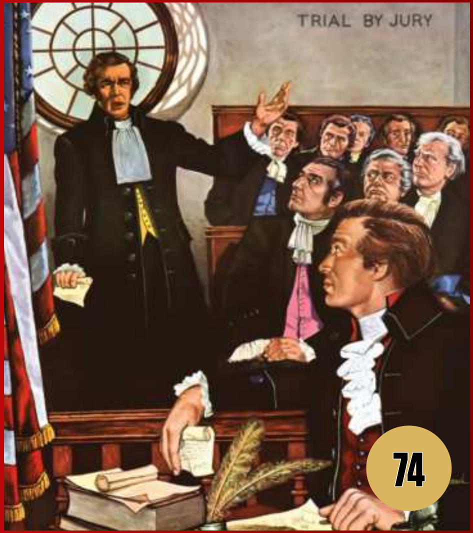
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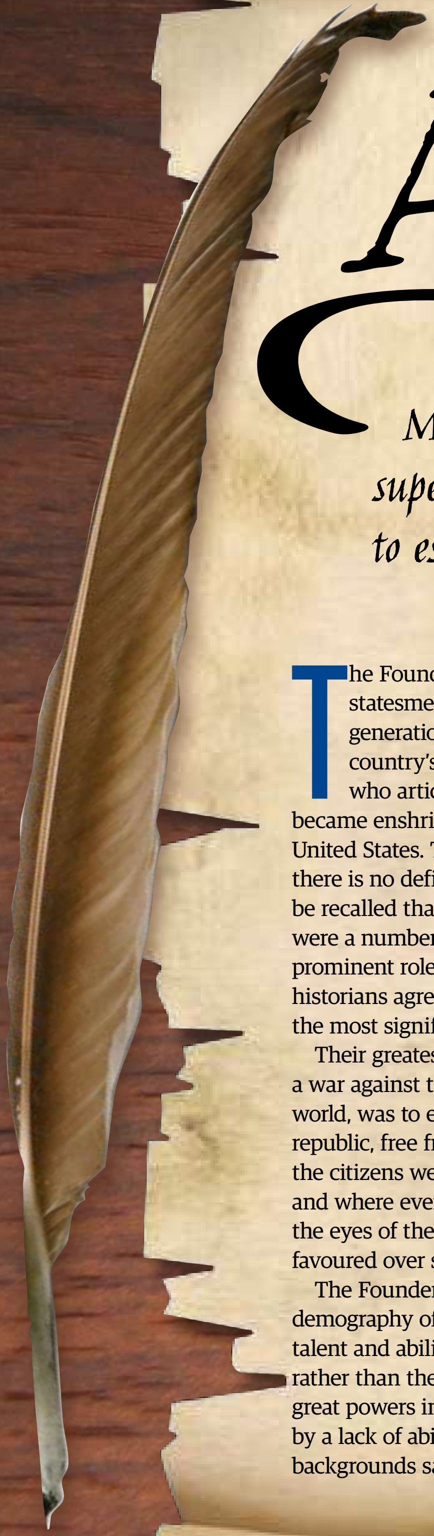


The men who made America

Meet the statesmen who defied the world's greatest superpower and threw off the shackles of colonial rule to establish ideals that would shape the governments of the modern world...

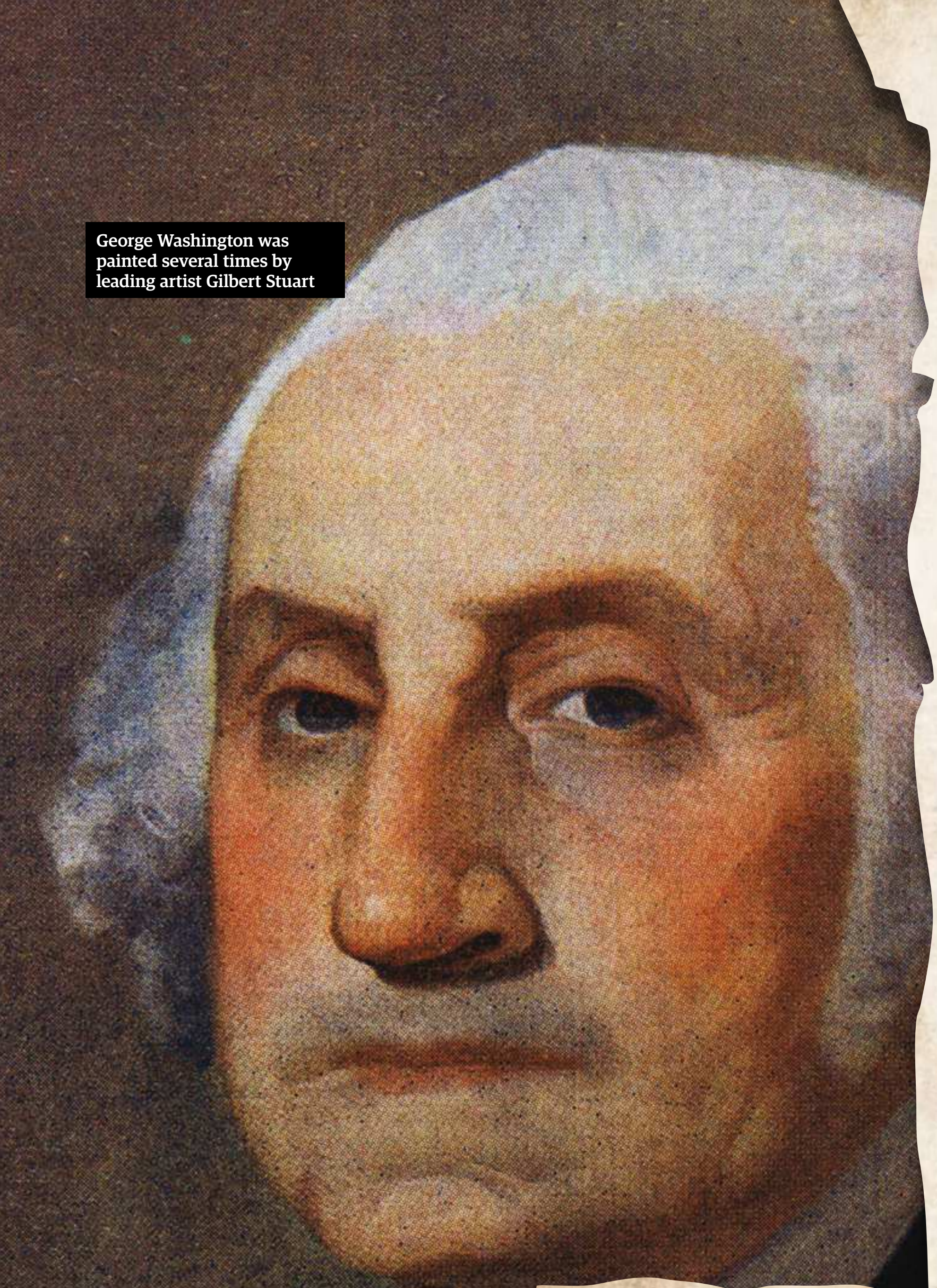
The Founding Fathers were the foremost statesmen of America's revolutionary generation, the men who secured their country's independence from Britain and who articulated the liberal principles that became enshrined in the Constitution of the United States. There are no set criteria for inclusion, there is no definitive list of members, and it should be recalled that in spite of the terminology, there were a number of talented women who played a prominent role in the birth of America. However, historians agree that the ten men listed here made the most significant contributions.

Their greatest achievement, aside from winning a war against the most powerful empire in the world, was to establish such a large modern republic, free from the grip of monarchy, in which the citizens were the ultimate arbiters of power and where every man and woman was equal in the eyes of the law. In addition, capitalism was favoured over state-sponsored monopolies.

The Founders' success highlights the demography of the colonial system, where it was talent and ability that saw men rise to prominence, rather than the quality of their bloodline. The great powers in Europe were often compromised by a lack of ability among those whose aristocratic backgrounds saw them inherit public office. Thomas Jefferson once described the Founders as "a natural aristocracy".

And there was diversity among these men. Whereas the great revolutions in France, Russia and China saw one man emerge as a figurehead, the revolution in America remained pluralistic. George Washington was the first president, but there was much debate and argument between Federalists like Washington, John Adams and Alexander Hamilton and staunch Republicans like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. The checks and balances these men imposed upon one another's ideals fed into the constitution itself.

The Founders experienced failures too, of course, most pertinently when dealing with slavery and the Native American population. All the Founders realised that the concept of slavery was anathema to a democratic republic founded on the principles of liberty and freedom. And yet the slave population grew during the United States' formative years: there were 500,000 enslaved persons in 1775; by 1860, natural reproduction had seen this number balloon to 4,000,000. The Founders failed to conquer this issue – they were concerned with the Southern states' threat to secede from the union, and could not imagine a biracial society. Their inertia would eventually lead to civil war.



George Washington was painted several times by leading artist Gilbert Stuart

1732-1799

George Washington

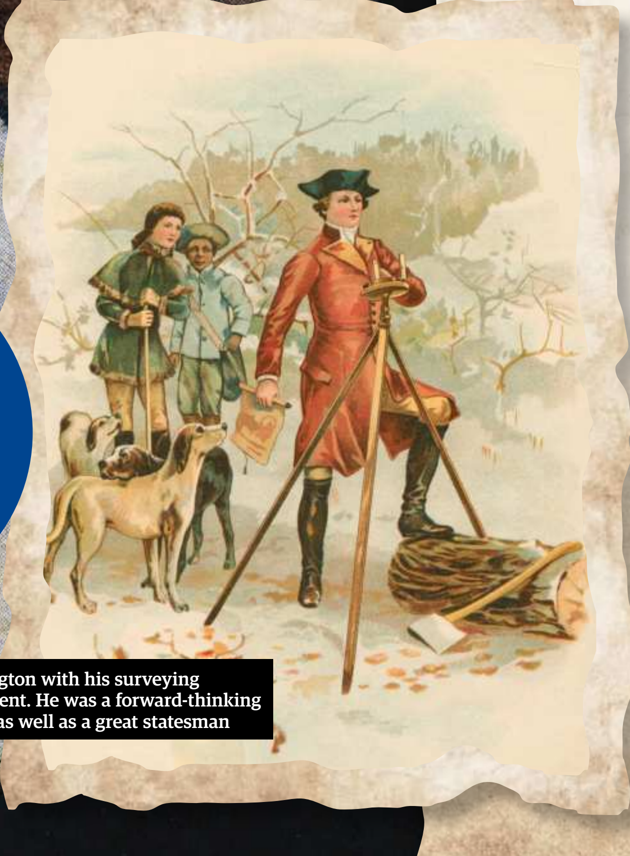
A brilliant statesman and commander in chief of the colonial armies, Washington became the first president of the United States

At the age of 20, George Washington inherited Mount Vernon – one of Virginia's finest estates – from his eldest half-brother. Around the same time, he began his military career, achieving the rank of colonel at the age of 22 when fighting in the French and Indian War. His early career was marked by defeats against the French, though he always showed coolness and determination in combat. Hence by 1758, he was in command of all Virginia's troops – although, irked by the low regard in which the British Army held colonial officers, he soon resigned though retained the honorary rank of Brigadier General.

On resigning his commission, he married Martha Dandridge in early 1759. They conceived no children of their own, but he lavished much love upon his step-children and their offspring. He was an exemplary and innovative farmer and proved a caring slave-owner. During these years, he remained a loyal subject to the British Crown even though his need for imported materials made him all too aware of the commercial restrictions Britain placed on its colonies. This burden increased from 1764 and from this period onwards, Washington began to question his loyalty to the Crown – though, like most Americans, he did not yet envisage a war of independence.

As Anglo-American relations worsened during the 1770s, Washington attended and signed the resolutions proposed by the First Continental Congress. He was elected to the Second Continental Congress in 1775, and as all-out war loomed, he was chosen as the commander-in-chief of the colonial armies. He was not a great tactician and made many military blunders, but his resolve and strength of character kept a large military force intact and pulled victory from the jaws of defeat when, after a crushing reverse at New York City, he won pivotal victories at Trenton and Princeton. The key victory, at Yorktown in 1781, owes much to Washington's vision.

He played a prominent role at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and though reluctant to hold further public office, his intelligence and the loyalty he inspired saw his election to the first presidency of the United States in 1789. He served two terms, withstanding the pressures of a third, and adopted a methodical and judicious approach to policy throughout his tenure. He died at home on his estate in December 1799.



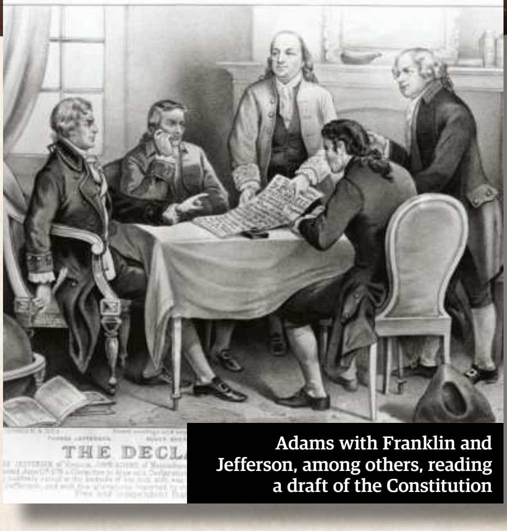
Washington with his surveying equipment. He was a forward-thinking farmer as well as a great statesman

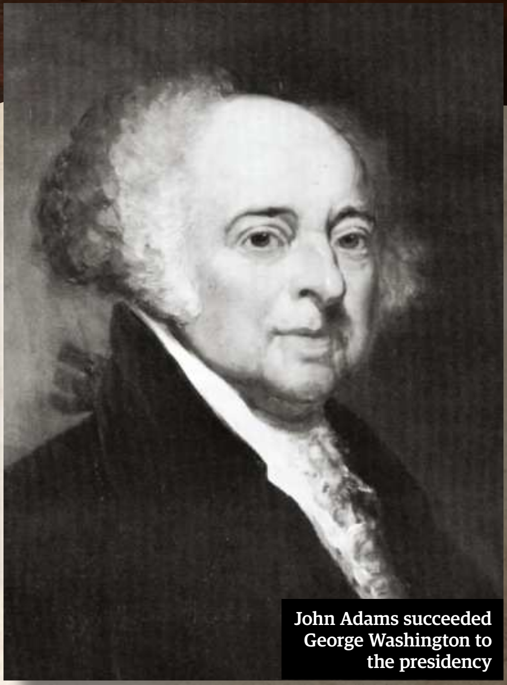
The Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress on 4 July 1776

1735-1826

John Adams

A true firebrand, Adams became the first vice president and second president of the United States


Adams with Franklin and Jefferson, among others, reading a draft of the Constitution


John Adams succeeded George Washington to the presidency

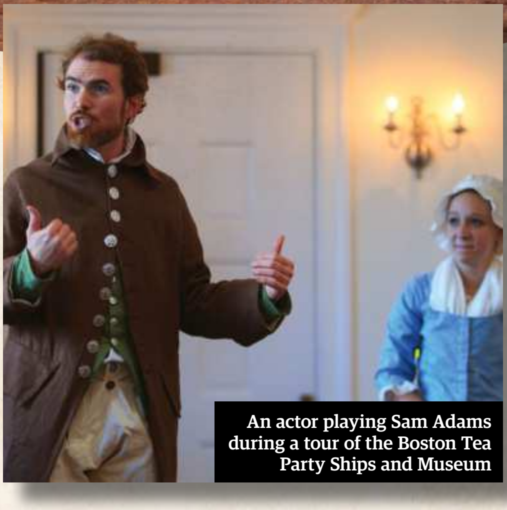
John Adams' legal career saw him emerge as a leading voice against the injustice many Americans felt was being forced upon them by the British Crown. In 1764, he married, and his wife Abigail Adams became an important figure in American political life. In the following year, Adams published a dissertation attacking the much-hated Stamp Act, and he went on to become a leading advocate of arguments against the Townshend Acts, which imposed duties on imported commodities like glass, lead, paper, paint and tea. His adherence to the legal process saw him defend the British soldiers who fired on a crowd during the Boston Massacre of 1770.

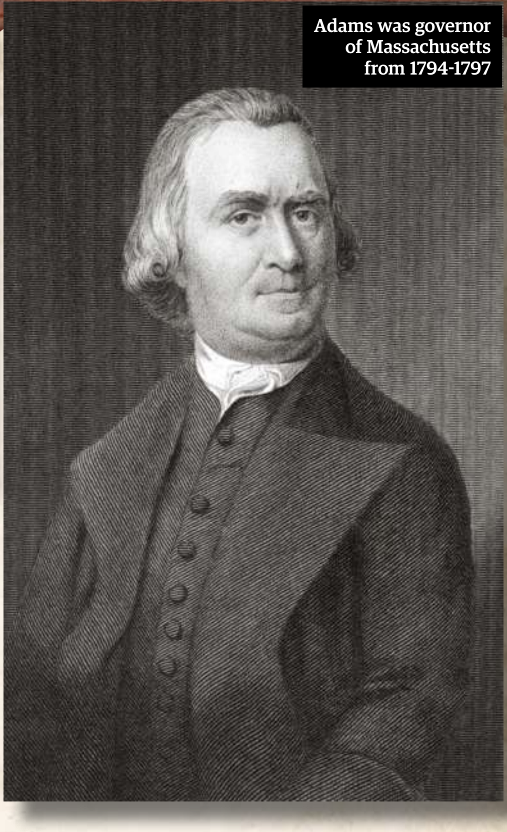
He was a prominent figure at the First (1774) and the Second (1775) Continental Congress and he nominated George Washington as commander-in-chief of the colonial armies as the War of Independence loomed. He also selected Thomas Jefferson as the man to draft the Declaration of Independence. He joined Benjamin Franklin in Paris to negotiate the end of the war with Britain and upon his return to America, he ran for the first presidency, losing out to Washington. New electoral rules saw him appointed as vice president. He eventually succeeded Washington, holding the second presidency between 1797-1801.

1722-1803

Samuel Adams

Adams played a prominent role in planning the Boston Tea Party of 1773


An actor playing Sam Adams during a tour of the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum


Adams was governor of Massachusetts from 1794-1797

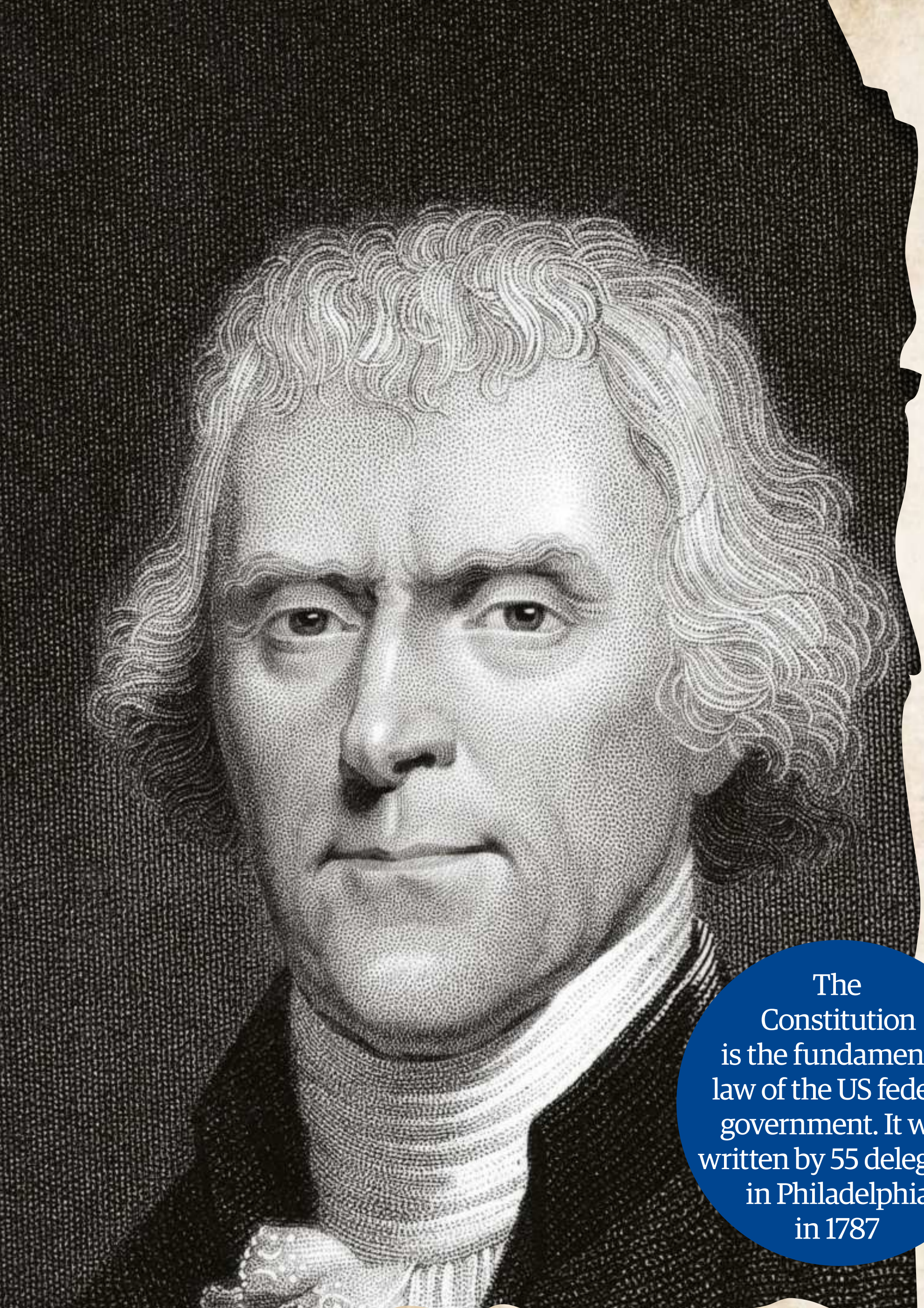
A second-cousin to the second president John Adams, Samuel Adams was an unsuccessful businessman and tax collector before turning his hand to politics. He denounced the Sugar Act of 1764 and played a key role in stirring up the Stamp Act riots that tore through Boston.

In 1769, he took leadership of the Massachusetts Radicals and became one of the first notable proponents of independence from the British Crown. He was an able propagandist and worked assiduously for the removal of British soldiers from Boston after the Massacre of 1770. He was a key figure in the planning of the Boston Tea Party of 1773, though there is no evidence he appeared on the docks in person, and he railed hard against the Coercive Acts that came in the Tea Party's wake. He served in the Constitutional Congress until 1781 and signed the first Declaration of Independence. He was lieutenant governor of Massachusetts from 1789-1793 and served as governor from 1794-1797.

1743-1826

Thomas Jefferson

The principal author of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson went on to serve as the third president of the United States

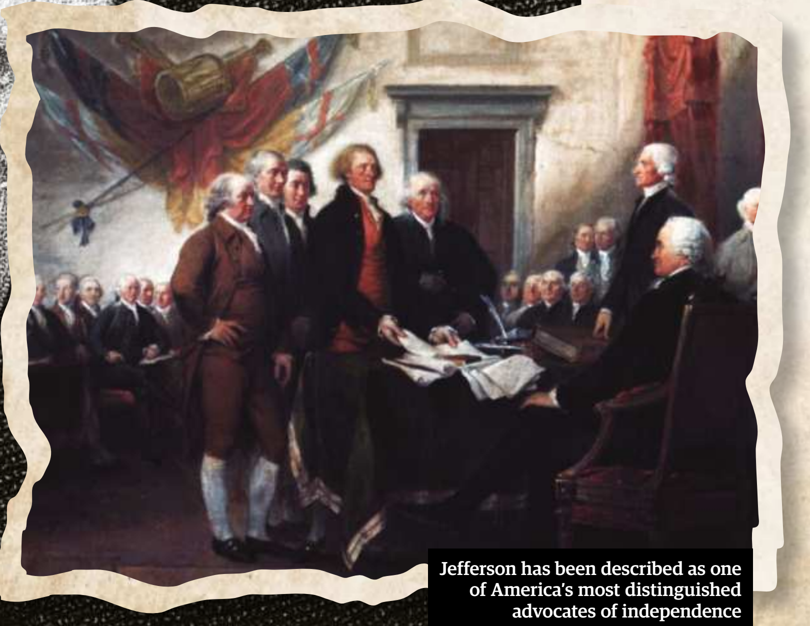


A diligent student, Thomas Jefferson chose to practise law and in 1774, wrote 'A Summary View of the Rights of British America', which brought him to national attention as a leading advocate of independence. He was appointed as a Virginian delegate to the Second Continental Congress (1775) and was appointed to a five-man committee (which included both Benjamin Franklin and John Adams), charged with drafting the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson was the principle author, responsible for the famous words, "All men are created equal… with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

He spent several years in France, a country with which he maintained close ties, and upon his return to America in 1789, he served George Washington as the United States' first secretary of state, during which he took responsibility for foreign policy. He favoured France during its conflict with Britain, remembering the European nation's support during the War of Independence, and argued against the Neutrality Act (1793) and the Jay Treaty (1795). Jefferson served as vice president under John Adams (1797-1801) and, as a strong anti-federalist, established the principles of the first-ever opposition party in America - the Republicans.

The Constitution is the fundamental law of the US federal government. It was written by 55 delegates in Philadelphia in 1787

He was elected the third president of the US, taking office in 1801, and was re-elected in 1804, serving until 1809. He oversaw the Louisiana Purchase from France for US$15 million, which not only enlarged the country but also removed European power from America's doorstep. He caused much distress to the country's fledgling economy, however, when he introduced the Embargo Act in 1807, closing American ports in a bid to affect French and British foreign policy.



Jefferson has been described as one of America's most distinguished advocates of independence

Thomas Jefferson's reputation has suffered because of his attitude towards race

The greatest damage to his reputation has come through his views on race. He understood that an enslaved population was contrary to America's liberal ideals and his first draft of the Declaration of Independence condemned the injustice of the slave trade (though this passage was edited out). Modern DNA evidence also shows that he had children with his slave Sally Hemings. And yet he remained a slave owner throughout his life and his only published book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, records a deep-rooted racism. He also believed that America could not work as a biracial society.

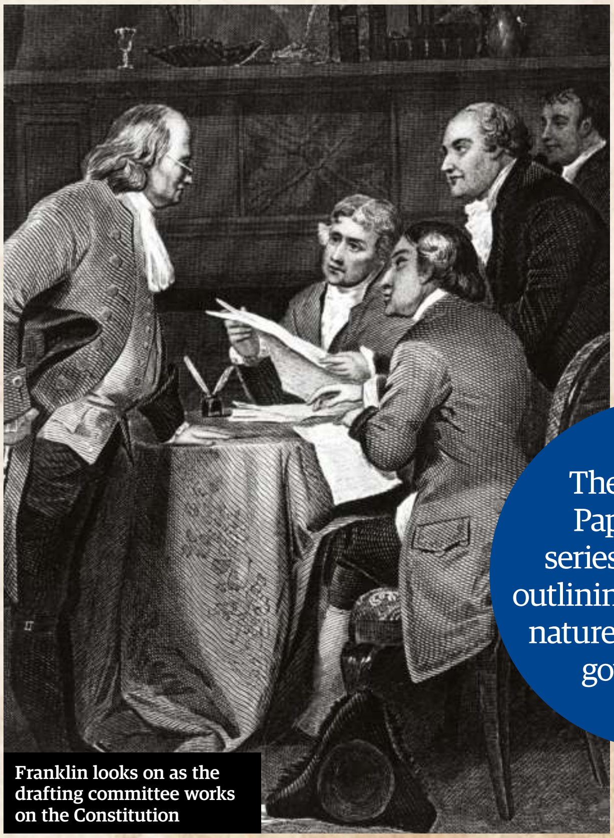
1706-1790

Benjamin Franklin

Journalist, publisher, scientist and statesman, Franklin stands as a true American genius

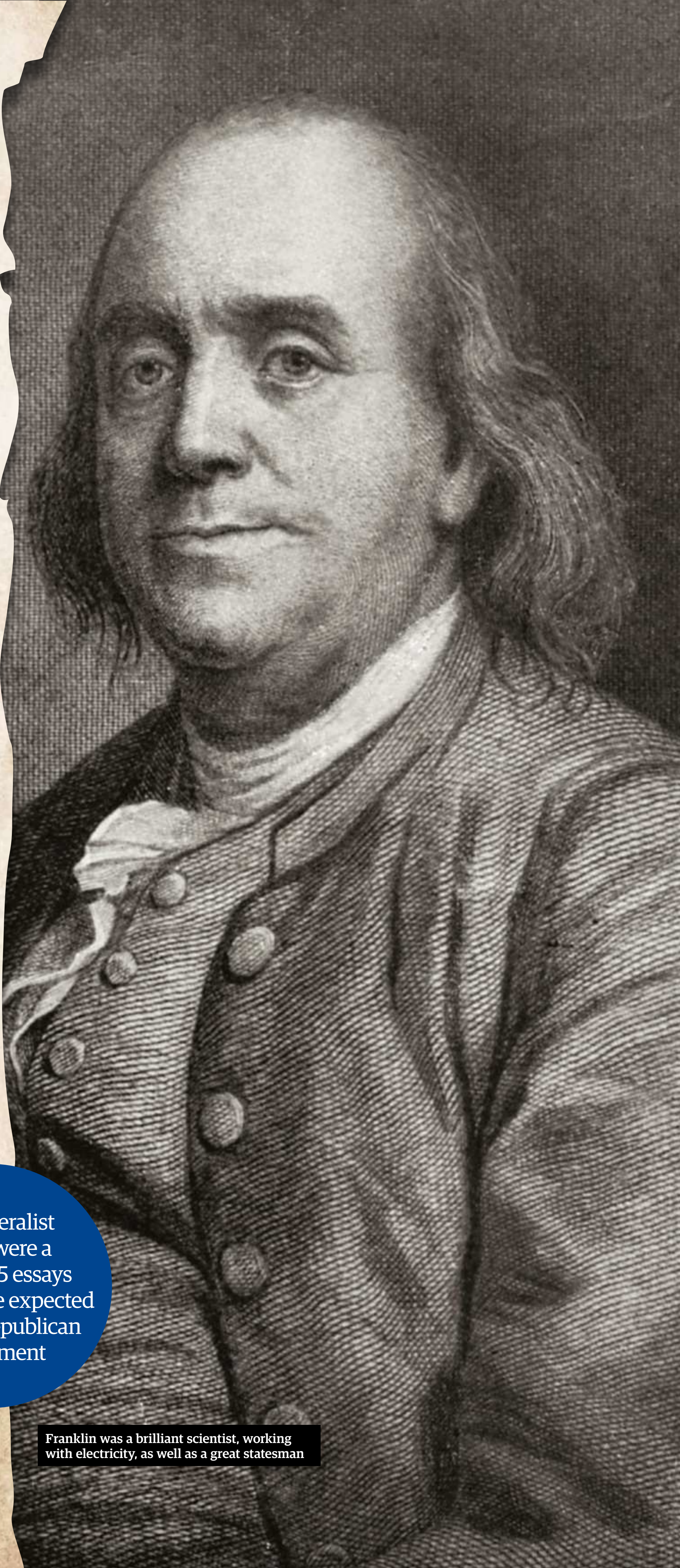
One of the most important of all the Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin began his professional life as a writer and publisher, and proved his business acumen by acquiring the printing rights for several states' paper currency. He proved a great scientist, working with electricity, and at the age of 42 he retired from active business, becoming a gentleman and entering the political arena. Spending much time in London, he became a staunch royalist and despaired of America's provinciality until he ran into trouble with the much-hated Stamp Act of 1765.

When slighted by the British establishment, Franklin secured election to the Second Congressional Congress and played up his role as a democratic folk hero from America when securing finance and support for his country from the French royal court. He emerged as one of the greatest Americans of his day, contributing to the writing of the Declaration of Independence, helping draft the Articles of Confederation, and standing as the eldest of those who wrote the Constitution of the United States. His autobiography became one of the most widely read books of the day, and his rise from relative obscurity to such a lofty position as businessman and statesman came to embody the vision of the American Dream.



Franklin looks on as the drafting committee works on the Constitution

The Federalist Papers were a series of 85 essays outlining the expected nature of republican government



Franklin was a brilliant scientist, working with electricity, as well as a great statesman

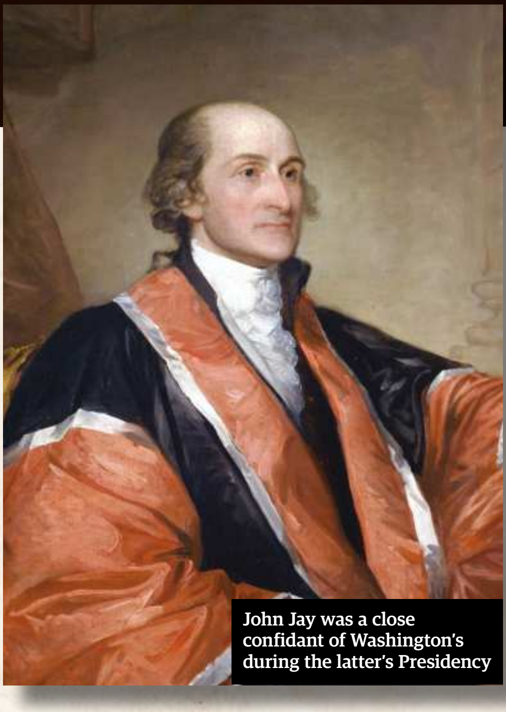
1745-1829

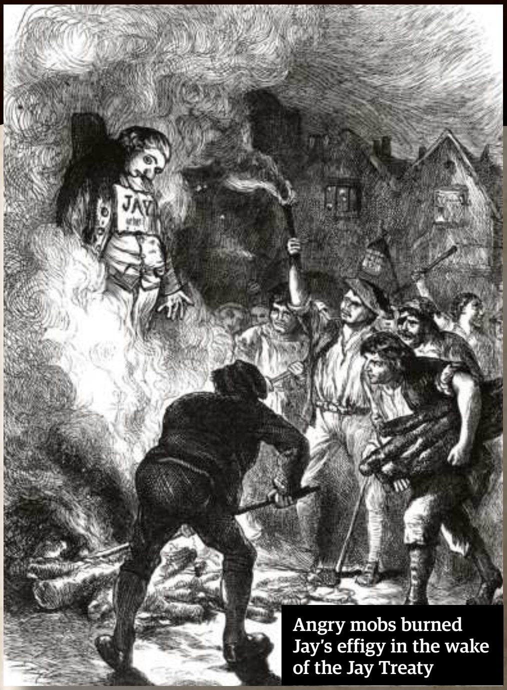
John Jay

The first chief justice of the United States, Jay was the chief negotiator in the controversial Jay Treaty of 1794

A delegate to the First Constitutional Congress (1774), John Jay drafted the address to Britain stating the colonists' aims, and he played an important role in assuring the approval of the Declaration of Independence (1776) in New York State. In 1777, he helped draft New York's first constitution and was also elected the state's first chief justice. In 1778, he was appointed president of the Continental Congress and four years later, was sent to Paris with Benjamin Franklin to negotiate the peace with Britain. He fought for the ratification of the federal Constitution (1778) and in 1789, was appointed as the country's first chief justice by George Washington.

In 1794, Washington sent him to Britain to avert war - a move that culminated in the Jay Treaty, which established the foundations for America to build its national economy and subsequent prosperity. Many Republicans, however, considered it a sell-out by the federal government, and the treaty's unpopularity scuppered Jay's chances of succeeding Washington as president.


John Jay was a close confidant of Washington's during the latter's Presidency



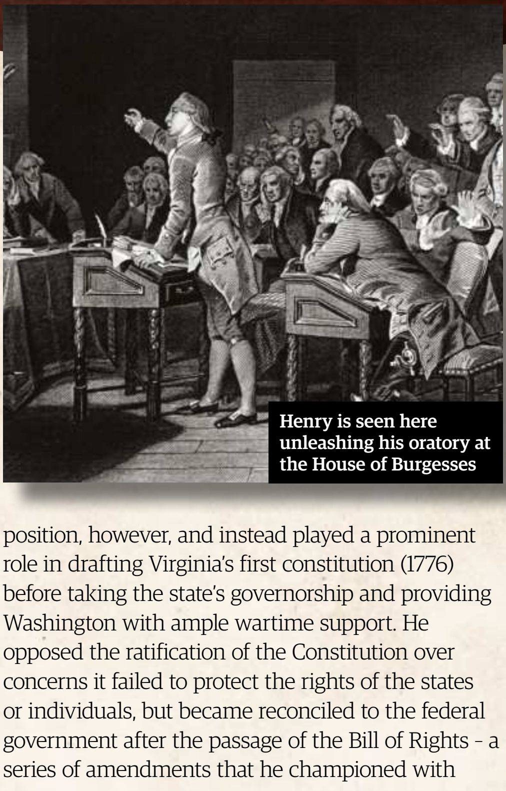
Angry mobs burned Jay's effigy in the wake of the Jay Treaty

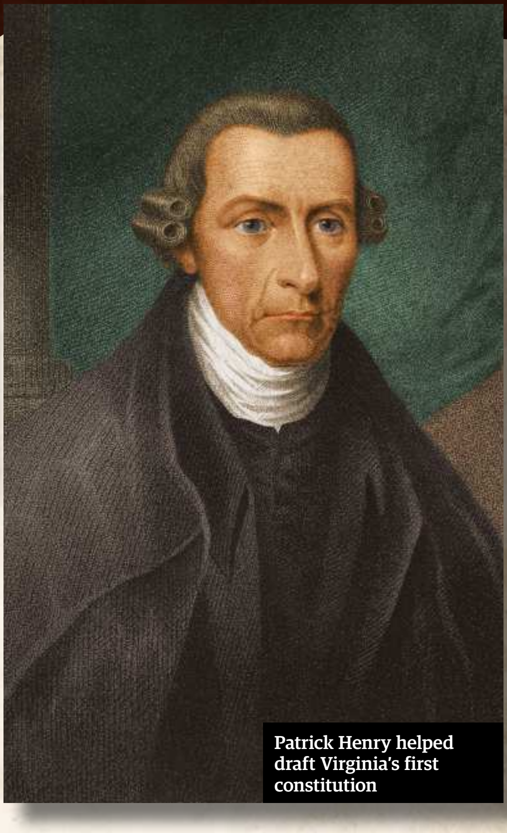
1736-1799

Patrick Henry

An able lawyer and fiery orator, Henry was largely responsible for the Bill of Rights

After failures as a businessman and farmer, Patrick Henry emerged as a talented lawyer and a highly skilled orator - talents he used to attack the Stamp Act of 1765. This launched him on the path of opposition to the British government, and he was a delegate at the Continental Congresses of 1774 and 1775. Aware that war was looming, he took command of the Virginia forces following his famous, fiery speech in which he declared, "Give me liberty or give me death." He resigned the position, however, and instead played a prominent role in drafting Virginia's first constitution (1776) before taking the state's governorship and providing Washington with ample wartime support. He opposed the ratification of the Constitution over concerns it failed to protect the rights of the states or individuals, but became reconciled to the federal government after the passage of the Bill of Rights - a series of amendments that he championed with great verve.

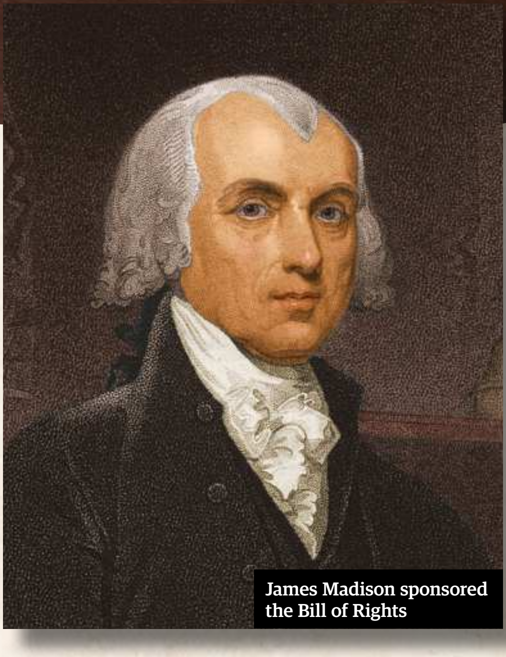

Henry is seen here unleashing his oratory at the House of Burgesses


Patrick Henry helped draft Virginia's first constitution

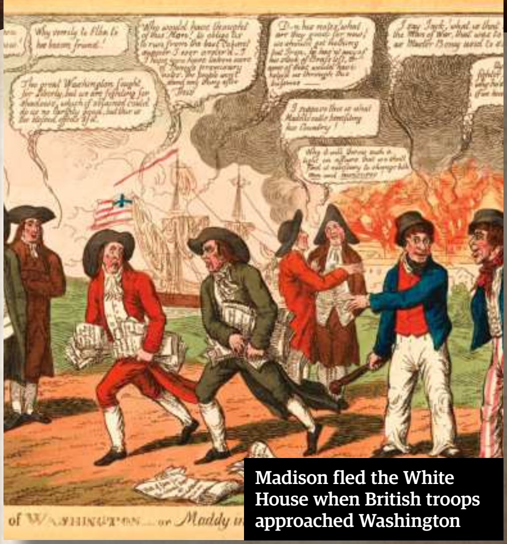
1751-1836

James Madison

Madison influenced the composition and ratification of the Constitution before becoming the fourth president of the United States



James Madison sponsored the Bill of Rights



Madison fled the White House when British troops approached Washington

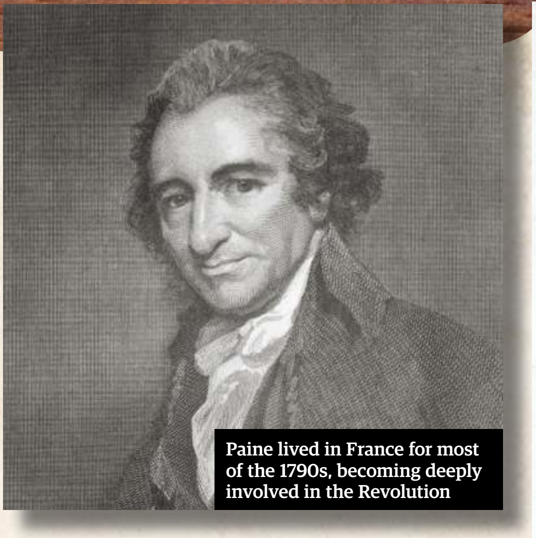
James Madison's work on the framework and guiding principles has seen him become known as the 'Father of the Constitution'. To promote its ratification, he joined Alexander Hamilton and John Jay in penning the Federalist Papers and was eventually elected to the House of Representatives. Once elected, he sponsored the first ten amendments to the Constitution, which became known collectively as the Bill of Rights. He split with Jay in opposition to the Jay Treaty, though his star continued to rise and he became secretary of state under the third president, Thomas Jefferson, serving from 1801-1808. During this period, America purchased the Louisiana Territory from France.

Though often criticised for weakness when dealing with the European superpowers, Madison was elected as the fourth president of the US in 1808 and was re-elected in 1812, becoming embroiled in the War of 1812, even though it was a conflict he had hoped to divert. This was a conflict which contemporaries viewed as an American success, though it has become synonymous with the image of Madison and his family fleeing the White House in the face of a British advance that saw the state mansion and many other public buildings razed to the ground. History still remembers him as one of America's greatest statesmen.

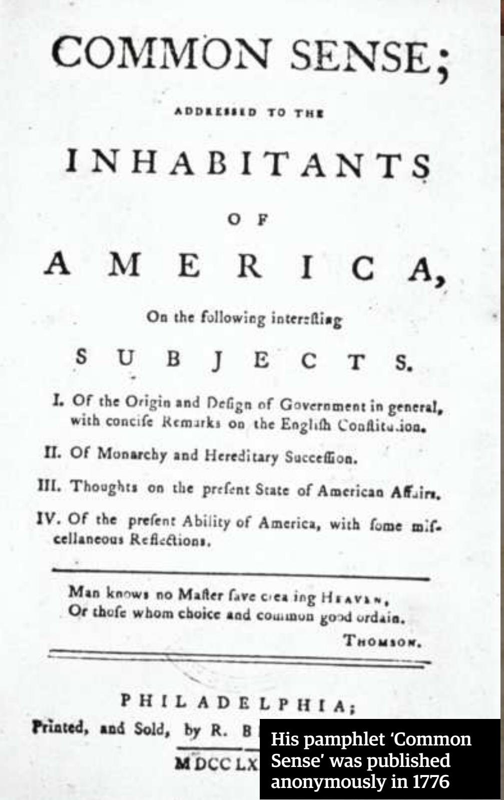
1737-1809

Thomas Paine

Paine authored some of the most influential pamphlets of the American Revolution



Paine lived in France for most of the 1790s, becoming deeply involved in the Revolution



COMMON SENSE;

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

AMERICA,

On the following intereſting

SUBJECTS.

I. Of the Origin and Deſign of Government in general, with conciſe Remarks on the Engliſh Conſtitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succeſſion.

III. Thoughts on the preſent State of American Affairs.

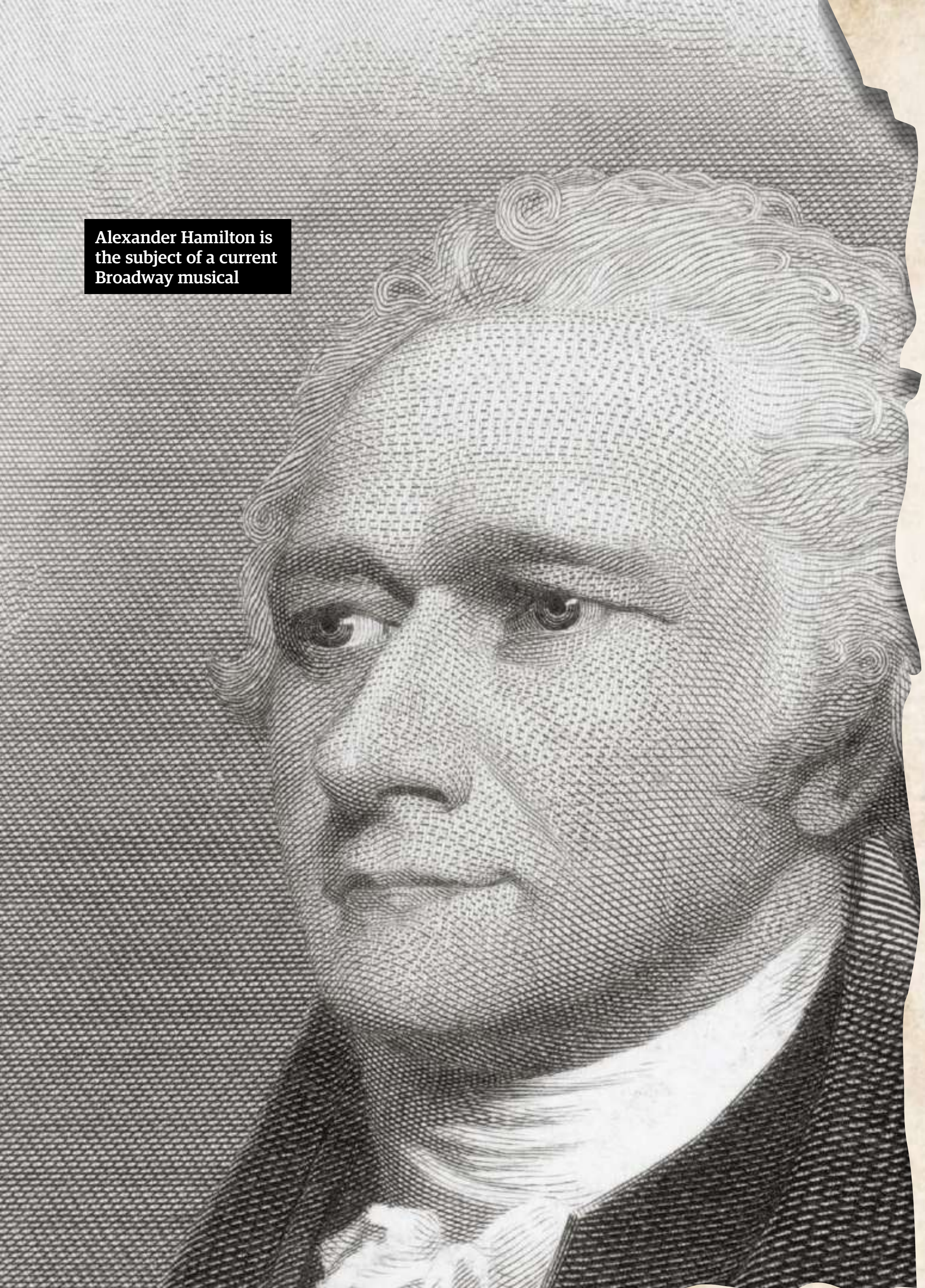
IV. Of the preſent Ability of America, with ſome miſcellaneous Reflections.

Man knows no Maſter ſave creating Heaven,
Or thoſe whom choice and common good ordain.
THOMSON.

PHILADELPHIA;
Printed, and Sold, by R. B
MDCCLX

His pamphlet 'Common Sense' was published anonymously in 1776

Thomas Paine arrived in America just as tension between Britain and the colonies was reaching crisis point. After the Battles of Lexington and Concord, Paine argued that the revolt should not aim for the crushing of unfair taxation but should instead target full independence. He threw his weight behind the notion with the publication of his pamphlet 'Common Sense' in early 1776, which sold more than half-a-million copies in the first few months. This publication paved the way for the Declaration of Independence, which was universally ratified later in the year. He served as volunteer aide to General Greene and published 16 more highly influential political papers between 1776-1783, which did much to galvanise revolutionary thought. He went on to become one of the greatest political propagandists of the age, with 'The Rights of Man' advocating the ideals of the French Revolution and 'The Age of Reason', which explored the relationship between religion and secular society.



Alexander Hamilton is the subject of a current Broadway musical

c1757-1804

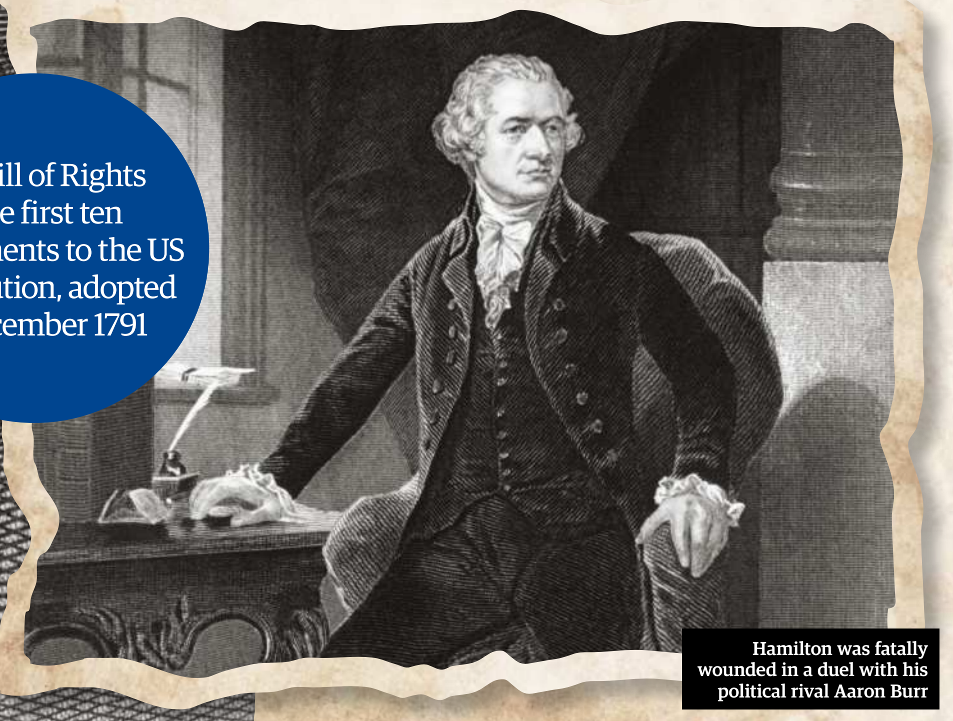
Alexander Hamilton

One of America's first great nationalists, Hamilton proved pivotal in forging the ideals of the Union

A keen and studious young man, Alexander Hamilton became a confidant of George Washington and proved an able soldier, playing prominent roles in the War of Independence, commanding artillery at the Battle of Trenton and leading an assault during the siege of Cornwallis's army at Yorktown. In 1783, he began to practise law in New York, and his strong understanding saw him appointed to the state's delegation to the 1787 Constitutional Convention. He helped secure the Constitution's ratification via his work on the Federalist Papers and in 1789, was appointed first secretary of the treasury.

His strong federalist beliefs, and their execution in policy, are often credited with the formation of political parties in the US - something which Hamilton and Washington deplored. And yet he emerged as the leader of the Federalist Party, who in terms of foreign policy advocated close links with Britain. They were opposed by the Republicans, who wanted to maintain links with France. When the two European superpowers went to war in 1793, Hamilton managed to steer America into a position of neutrality, which was generally regarded as a pro-British move. A pragmatic administrator, he defended the unpopular Jay Treaty and is remembered as one of America's first great nationalists.

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the US Constitution, adopted in December 1791



Hamilton was fatally wounded in a duel with his political rival Aaron Burr

Founding Fathers By Numbers

From their average age to where they came from, discover the vital statistics of the men who established the United States

John Adams was the only president of the first five not to have been a slaveholder

Ages when the Declaration of Independence was Signed

Alexander Hamilton	21
James Madison	25
John Jay	30
Thomas Jefferson	33
Patrick Henry	40
John Adams	40
George Washington	44
Benjamin Franklin	70
Average Age	38

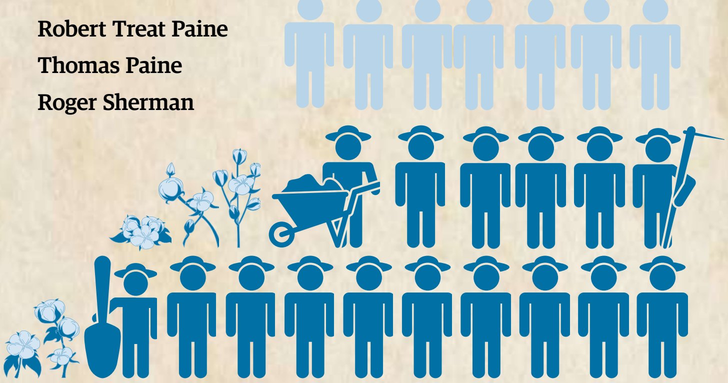
Slaveholders:

- Charles Carroll
- Samuel Chase
- Benjamin Franklin
- Button Gwinnett
- John Hancock
- Patrick Henry
- John Jay
- Thomas Jefferson
- Richard Henry Lee
- James Madison
- Charles Cotesworth Pinckney
- Benjamin Rush
- Edward Rutledge
- George Washington

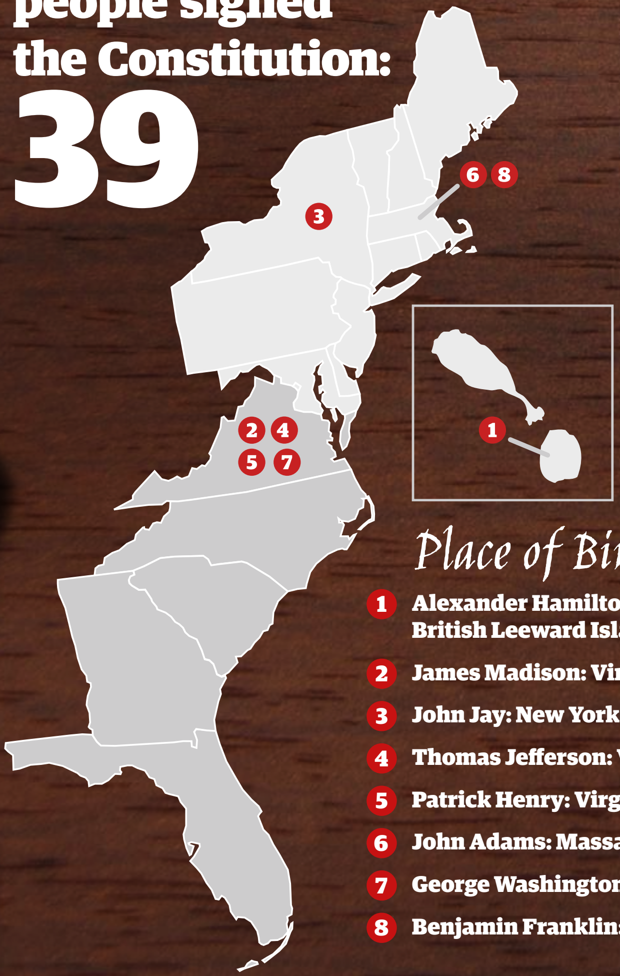
Non-Slaveholders:

- John Adams
- Samuel Adams
- Oliver Ellsworth
- Alexander Hamilton
- Robert Treat Paine
- Thomas Paine
- Roger Sherman

Founding Fathers who owned slaves



Number of people signed the Constitution: 39



Place of Birth

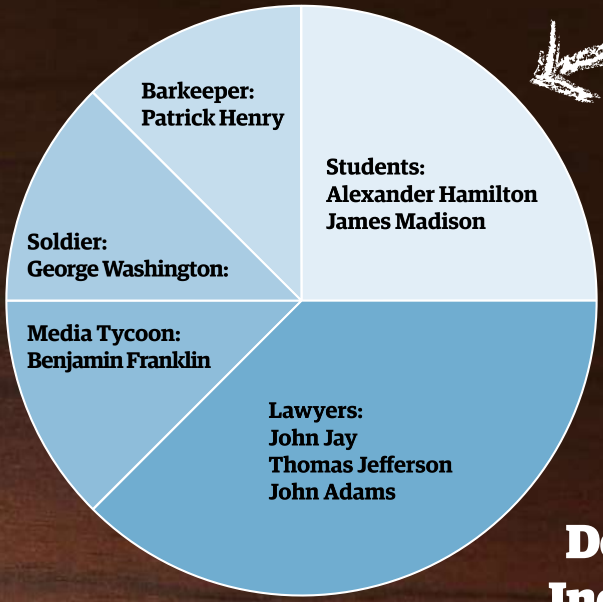
1. **Alexander Hamilton: British Leeward Islands (West Indies)**
2. **James Madison: Virginia**
3. **John Jay: New York**
4. **Thomas Jefferson: Virginia**
5. **Patrick Henry: Virginia**
6. **John Adams: Massachusetts**
7. **George Washington: Virginia**
8. **Benjamin Franklin: Massachusetts**

Only two people actually signed the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776:

John Hancock and Charles Thomson

Almost everyone else signed it on 2 July

James Madison was Princeton University's first graduate



Occupation prior to the Revolutionary War

Number of people who signed the Declaration of Independence:

56

Number of Founding Fathers who wrote the Constitution: 4

Thomas Jefferson
James Madison
Thomas Paine
John Adams

Drinks consumed by delegates of the Constitutional Convention:

54 bottles of Madeira
60 bottles of Claret
9 bottles of Whiskey
22 bottles of Porter
8 bottles of Cider
12 bottles of Beer
7 bowl of Alcoholic Punch

Number of original copies of the Declaration of Independence that are known to exist:

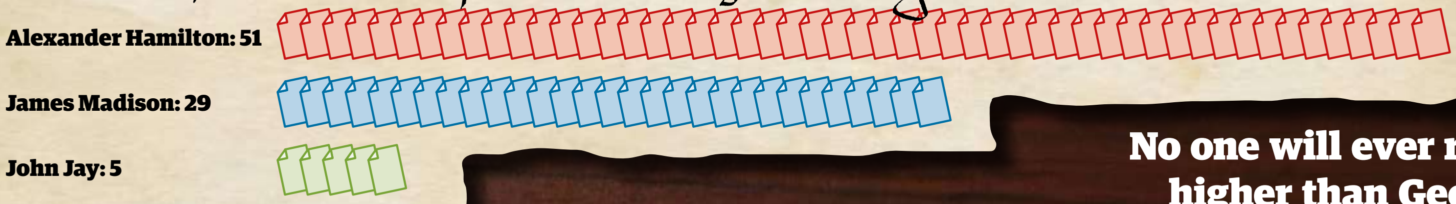
26

3 Founding fathers appear on US dollar bills

$2 - Thomas Jefferson $10 - Alexander Hamilton $100 - Benjamin Franklin

But James Madison also appeared on the $5,000 bill, which was printed 1918-1945.

Number of Federalist Papers written by Founding Fathers

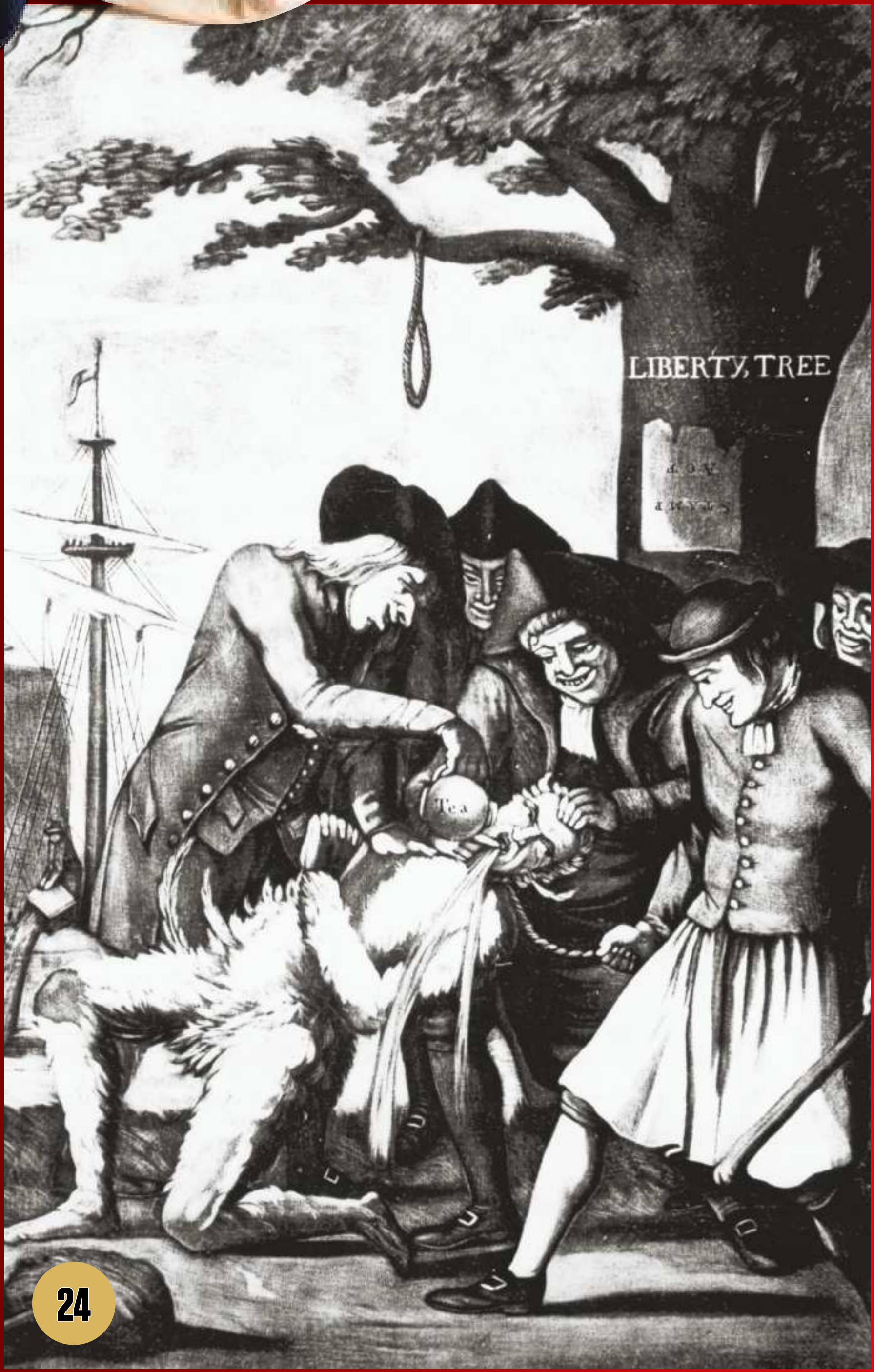


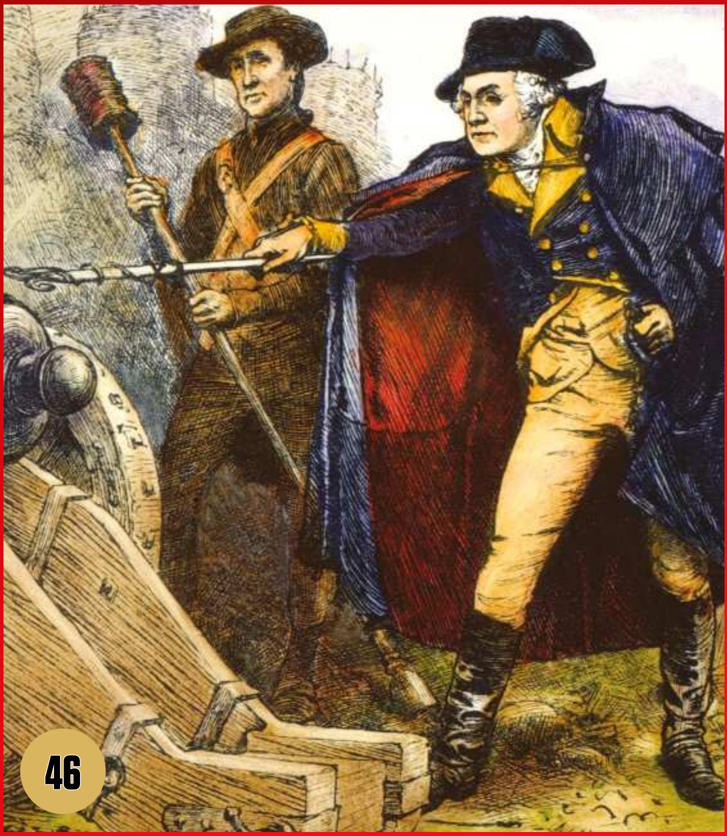
Size of John Hancock's signature on the Declaration of Independence:

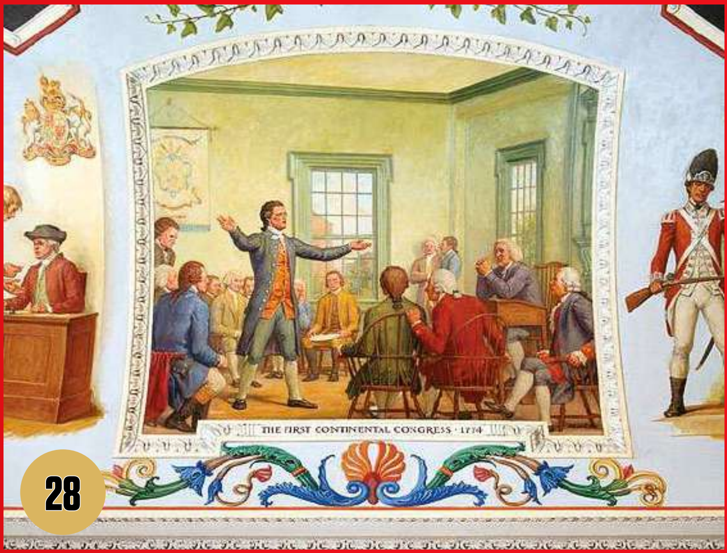
6.1 square inches

No one will ever rank higher than George Washington in the US Military

In 1976, a law passed posthumously naming him General of the Armies of the United States.


LIBERTY TREE
Tea
24

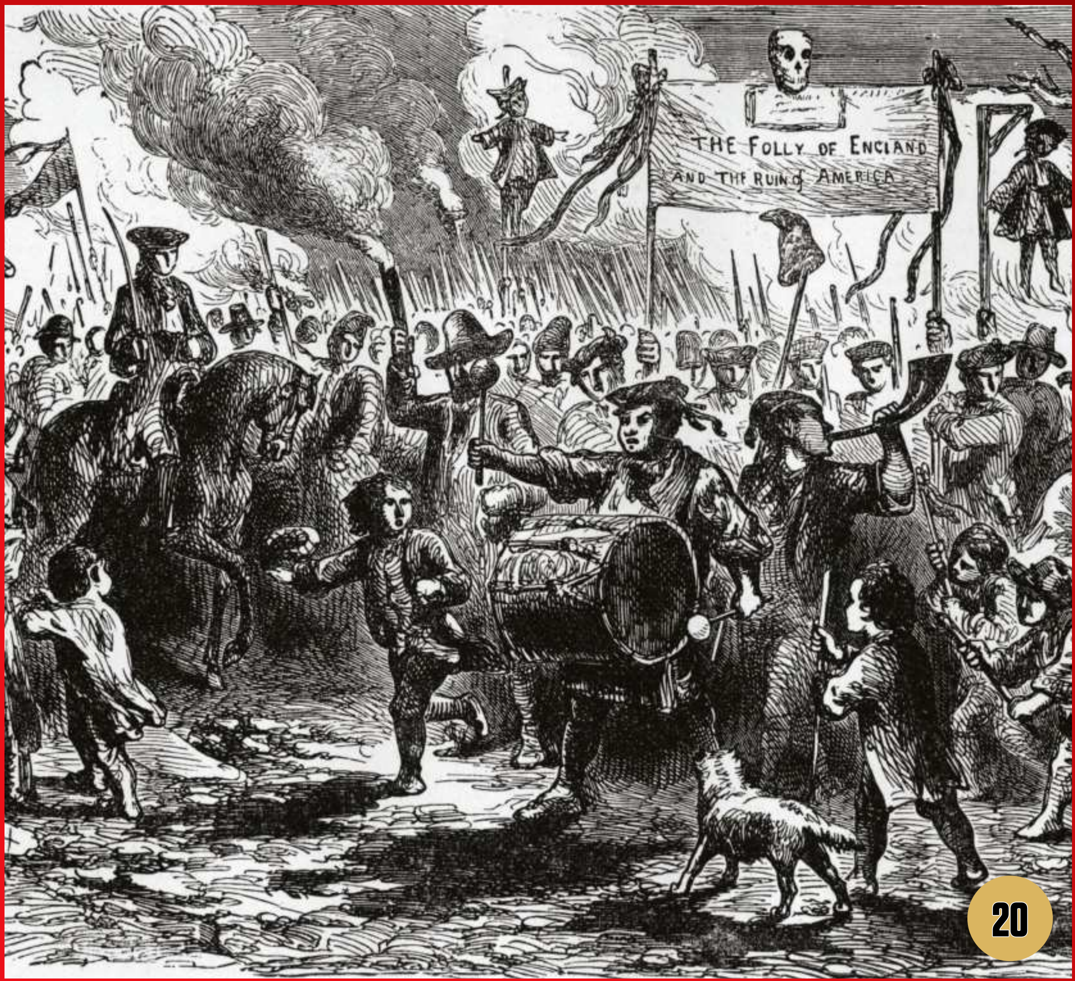



THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS · 1774
28

American Revolution

From the ‘shot heard round the world’ to the Siege of Yorktown, discover how the Founding Fathers threw off the shackles of British rule

020 **The march to revolution**
024 **The Boston Tea Party**
028 **The First Continental Congress**
030 **War begins on Lexington Green**
034 **The Second Continental Congress**
036 **Turning point at Saratoga**
040 **The Native American revolutionary experience**
046 **Decision at Yorktown**


THE FOLLY OF ENGLAND
AND THE RUIN of AMERICA

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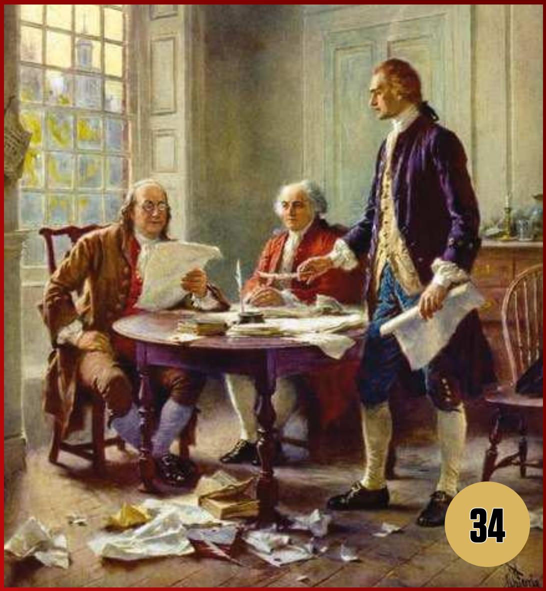

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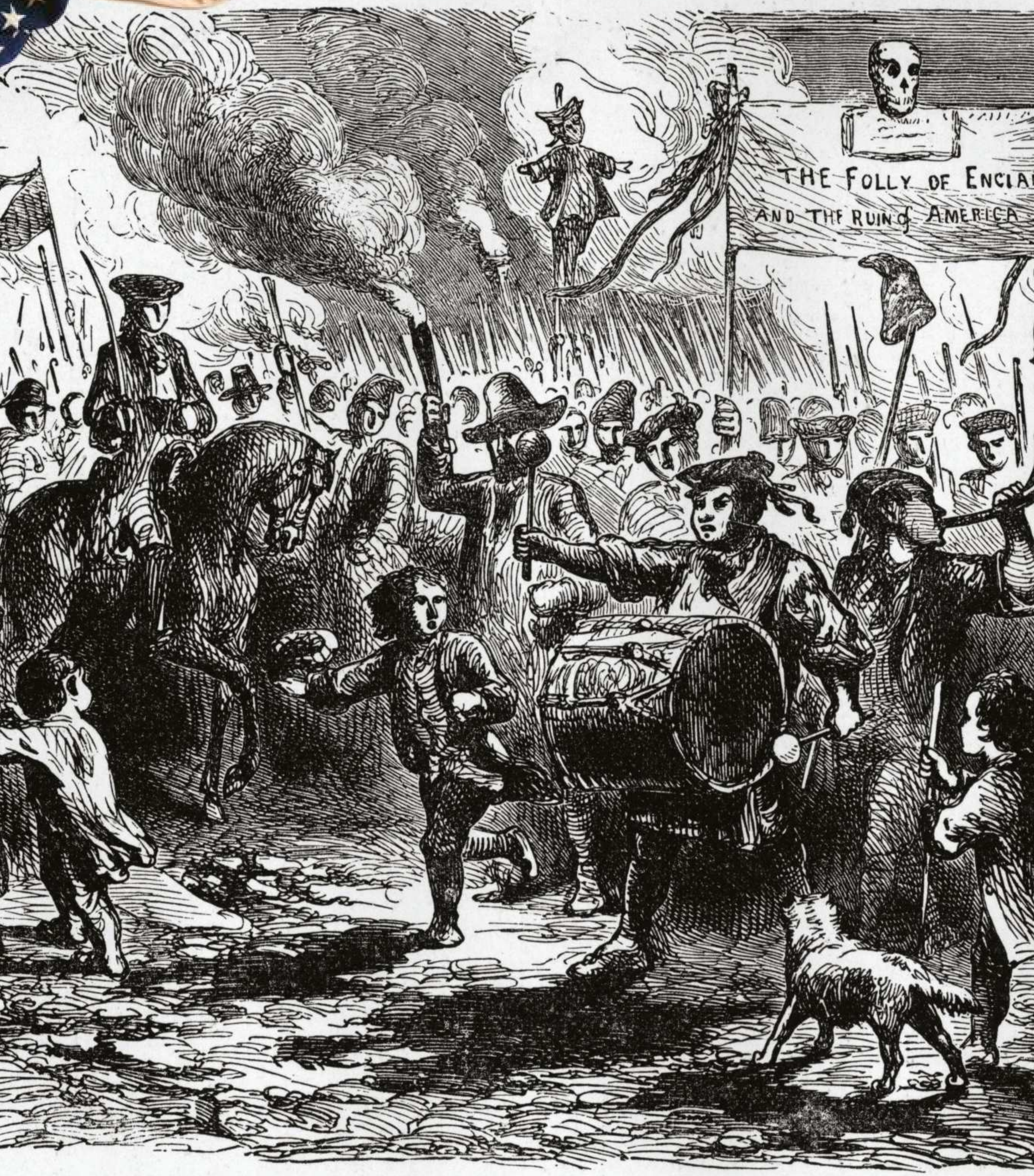
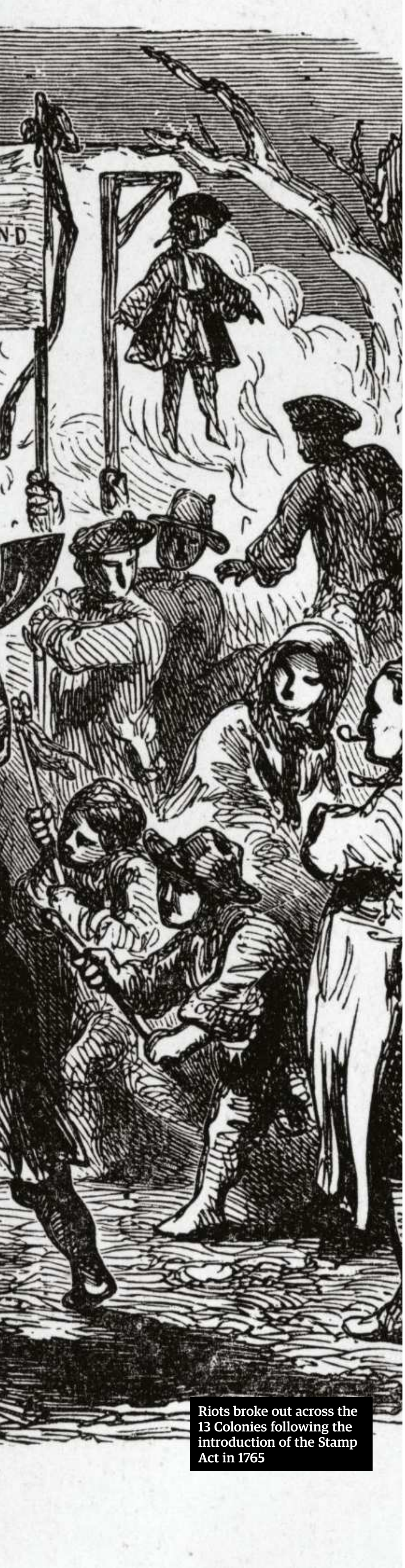

THE FOLLY OF ENGLA
AND THE RUIN of AMERICA

THE STAMP RIOTS IN NEW YORK.



Riots broke out across the 13 Colonies following the introduction of the Stamp Act in 1765

© Getty

1763-1774

The march to revolution

A growing national identity and the perceived oppressive rule of the British Crown spurred 13 North American colonies to fight for independence

Military and political upheaval, the passage of time and the obstacle of distance conspired to foster a burgeoning national identity among the subjects of the British Crown in the 13 North American colonies. Despite their common British heritage, the colonists - through nearly two centuries of societal establishment and expansion - had begun to see themselves more as 'Virginians' or 'New Yorkers', and eventually, more as 'Americans'.

Economic prosperity in an industrialised north and an agrarian south had fuelled a spirit of independence, while the lure of a vast unsettled territory to the west beckoned those seeking land and fortune beyond the Allegheny Mountains. Although cultural and ethnic diversity and differing perspectives on the future did exist in the colonies, the notion of an independent nation had begun to take hold by the end of the French and Indian War - the North American theatre of the worldwide Seven Years' War - in 1763. Ironically, Great Britain, through private and government-sponsored investment, had nurtured the spark of national identity in North America that grew into a flame.

Centuries of rivalry among the European powers, principally Great Britain, France and Spain, had resulted in numerous wars for empire that predictably spread to North America. With its victory in the French and Indian War, Britain at long last had terminated 150 years of French colonisation in the New World. In the process, the British Army and Navy had protected and preserved colonial lives, property and commerce. The inevitable but unintended consequence of victory was the huge cost of the war, which had more than doubled the British national debt. In turn, the crushing burden was being borne by the ordinary British citizen - the working taxpayer. As British subjects, the colonists had enjoyed the protection of the British military during the war, and its presence was still required in a defensive posture against Native American uprisings or further incursions by the French or Spanish.

Colonial militia, including troops under George Washington, fought with the British in the French and Indian War

Logically, parliament in far-off London sought a solution to its fiscal frustrations. Since the colonists had benefited from the protection and succour of the Crown, they should pay their share. Strict enforcement of the long-ignored Navigation Acts curbed a previously brisk clandestine trade, with seizures of property and searches of warehouses without warrants. In 1764, the 30-year-old Molasses Act was revived and enhanced with the Sugar Tax, threatening the free flow of rum through commerce with the West Indies. The Quartering Act of 1765 mandated that the colonies would host 10,000 British troops while feeding, housing and otherwise paying directly for their maintenance and upkeep.

In the same year, the Stamp Act levied the first substantive direct tax on the colonies. All printed documents, from decks of playing cards to newspapers, wills and marriage licences, were required to carry a royal stamp indicative of a tax that had been paid. A great howl erupted in the colonies and parliament caved in to popular sentiment, repealing the Stamp Act the following year. However, parliament refused to fully relent and clearly pointed out that it retained the right to tax the colonies as it saw fit. In 1767, Charles Townshend, the chancellor of the exchequer, initiated the series of acts that bear his name, levying taxes on essential commodities such as

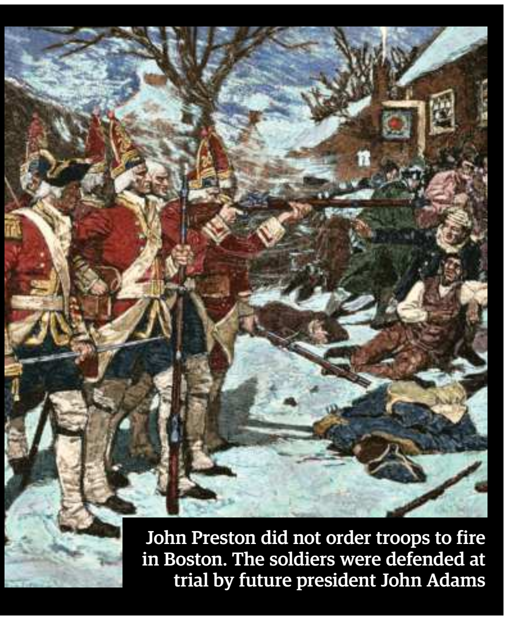
The Boston Massacre

The Boston Massacre, one of the events that stirred American revolutionary sentiment, may have been caused by an unpaid bill. The first redcoats sent to Boston to enforce the collection of the Townshend duties arrived in October 1768, and by the spring of 1770, four regiments were quartered - one soldier for every four Bostonians.

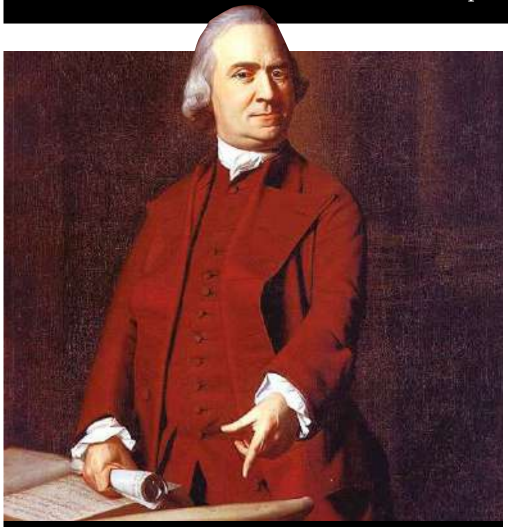
Accounts of the events of 5 March 1770 vary, but one report suggests that British captain John Goldfinch owed an upaid bill to a local wigmaker. While crossing King Street near the Custom House, the officer was spotted by Edward Garrick, the wigmaker's apprentice. Garrick began shouting at the officer to settle his account. Goldfinch was hurrying to Murray Barracks to take charge of a group of soldiers sent to quell another disturbance. He took little note of Garrick's collection attempt.

Private Hugh White of the 29th Regiment of Foot, the sentry posted at the Custom House, became the focus of Garrick's continuing tirade. The bell in a nearby church rang and more than 400 people spilled into the streets, baiting the sentry. Corporal William Wemm arrived with six soldiers, and then Captain John Preston proceeded to take command.

The soldiers understandably feared for their safety under the fusillade of snow, ice and stone. With fixed bayonets, they did not load their weapons until the mob pushed dangerously close. One of the privates, Hugh Montgomery, probably incited the deadly discharge when he yelled, "Damn you, fire!" Three demonstrators were killed on the spot, two were mortally wounded and six others were injured.



John Preston did not order troops to fire in Boston. The soldiers were defended at trial by future president John Adams



Revolutionary Samuel Adams spoke before crowds of Bostonians and wrote against the perceived injustices of taxation without representation

> "The colonists lashed out in protest… cutting trade with the mother country in half during the next two years"

glass, paint, lead, paper and tea. The colonists again lashed out in protest, reducing the volume of imports from Britain and cutting trade with the mother country in half during the next two years. The sickly British economy wobbled in response. In the restive colonies, the slogan "No Taxation Without Representation!" was commonly repeated. Career politician and revolutionary firebrand Samuel Adams stirred the population, while John Hancock, a wealthy merchant and shipping tycoon, organised resistance and undermined the tax laws at every opportunity.

In response, parliament dissolved the New York and Massachusetts assemblies and the Virginia House of Burgesses. Royal governors - the highest representatives of the Crown in the colonies - were given sweeping authority. Adams, however, harangued crowds of Bostonians, railing, "In all free states, the constitution is fixed; it is from thence, that the legislature derives its authority: therefore it cannot change the constitution without destroying its foundation."

More troops were sent to the colonies, particularly the port of Boston - a hotbed of unrest.

Timeline

1763

Defining moment

Treaty of Paris 1763

The Treaty of Paris, signed by Great Britain, France and Spain, ends the Seven Years' War, including the French and Indian War in North America. Although Britain restores some conquered lands to the French and Spanish, the nation receives tremendous territorial gains, including Canada, islands in the Caribbean, and the eastern half of Louisiana.

- **Parliament passes the Quartering Act**
  British soldiers in the 13 North American colonies are to be housed in barracks provided by the colonists, who are to pay for their room and board as well.
  24 March 1765

- **Henry's treason speech**
  On his birthday, Patrick Henry introduces the Virginia Resolves to the House of Burgesses in response to the proposed Stamp Act. He bellows, "If this be treason, make the most of it!"
  29 May 1765

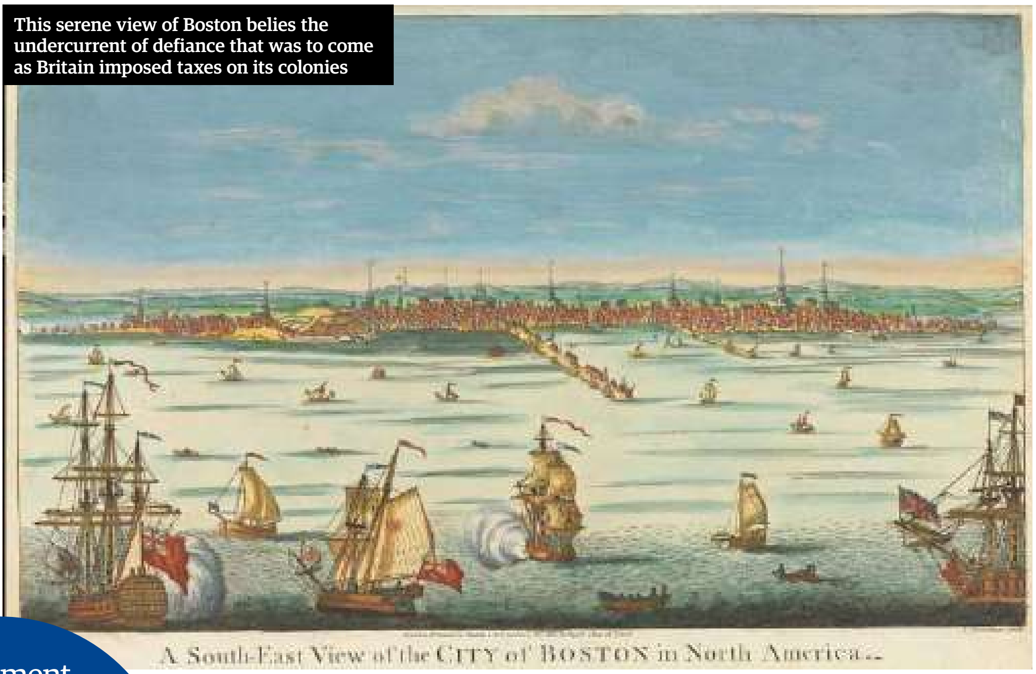
- **Enactment of the Stamp Act**
  The Stamp Act, providing for a royal tax payment in exchange for a stamp affixed to all printed material – including public and private documents – is enforced.
  1 November 1765

- **Repeal of the Stamp Act**
  Bowing to an outbreak of protest and civil disturbance in the 13 colonies, parliament repeals the hated Stamp Act but asserts its authority to levy taxes with the Declaratory Act.
  18 March 1766

- **Royal assent For Townshend Acts**
  King George III gives royal assent to the Townshend Acts, which levy taxes on numerous staple commodities imported by the North American colonies, including finished goods not produced by the colonists.
  29 June 1767

- **Charles Townshend dies suddenly**
  Chancellor of the exchequer Charles Townshend dies suddenly. His last major official act in office had been to sponsor the series of taxes on the colonies that bear his name.
  4 September 1767

- **Lord North becomes prime minister**
  Lord North, who leads Great Britain through much of the tribulation during the American Revolution, becomes prime minister.
  28 January 1770


This serene view of Boston belies the undercurrent of defiance that was to come as Britain imposed taxes on its colonies
A South-East View of the CITY of BOSTON in North America.

The soldiers were there to enforce the collection of the Townshend duties, and their presence was an even greater outrage since it compounded the expense associated with the Quartering Act. In growing numbers, colonists defied British authority, taking to the streets to burn effigies of King George III, who had vowed to "rule as well as reign" over the far-flung empire. Violence erupted from time to time, and angry mobs taunted and jeered at the soldiers, who were required to exercise care in the dealings with the local population. On 5 March 1770, a contentious encounter between soldiers and citizens resulted in British soldiers opening fire. In a flash, several protesters lay dead or wounded in the snowy street.

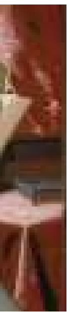
Within days, parliament drew back from the brink of martial law and repealed all of the Townshend Acts with the exception of the tax on tea. The gesture was tardy in coming. Blood was spilled and colonial propagandists labelled the incident the 'Boston Massacre', whipping anti-British sentiment to a frenzy. Civil disturbances became commonplace. Known loyalists to the Crown were terrorised, often fearing for their lives. Tax collectors were tarred and feathered; the mere presence of the tea tax was odious and had been reinforced by another measure called the Tea Act. In Rhode Island, a group of activists burned a customs schooner to the waterline in retaliation.

Then, on 16 December 1773, a trio of cargo ships lay in Boston Harbor, their holds filled with the tax-tainted tea. A militant group called the Sons of Liberty, dressed as Native Americans, boarded the ships and tossed the cargo into the water. The now legendary Boston Tea Party aroused an immediate and stern response from parliament. The upstart colonies had to be punished, particularly Massachusetts and the insidious nest of rebellion that was Boston. Parliament imposed the Coercive Acts, which the colonists labelled the 'Intolerable Acts', and closed the port of Boston while declaring martial law and marching an army into the city to quell the unrest. Boston residents were required to shelter the soldiers in their private homes.

> Parliament passed the Declaratory Act to reinforce its efforts to tax the colonies, even though it repealed the Stamp Act

While parliament considered further stern measures to deal with the insolent colonies, prime minister Lord North rose and pronounced: "The New England governments are in a state of rebellion, but four or five frigates will do business without any military force." At the same time, while the people of Massachusetts suffered privations with the closure of their great port, other colonies acknowledged their plight, sending wagonloads of supplies including grain, rum, medicine and some weapons. The Intolerable Acts served to further galvanise colonial public opinion against oppressive rule from an arrogant parliament, thousands of miles across the Atlantic Ocean, and in which they had no active voice.

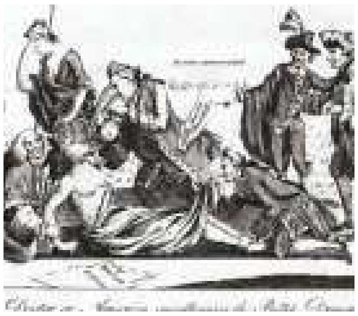
The pace of the march towards revolution quickened in early 1774, as Massachusetts issued a call for colonial leaders to gather to discuss their litany of complaints against the Crown. That autumn, the First Continental Congress convened in the city of Philadelphia. War was now only months away.



Defining moment

Seizure of the sloop *Liberty* 1768

The 50-gun Royal Navy warship HMS *Romney*, on station in Boston Harbor to enforce the collection of taxes under the provisions of the Townshend Acts, seizes the sloop *Liberty* for customs violations, specifically the unloading of a case of Madeira wine without proper documentation. *Liberty* is owned by wealthy Boston merchant John Hancock, who the British have long suspected of engaging in smuggling activity to avoid tax payments. Riots break out on the Boston waterfront, and the homes of customs officials are damaged. Hancock is arrested for smuggling, but his attorney, John Adams, succeeds in getting the charges dropped.



Defining moment

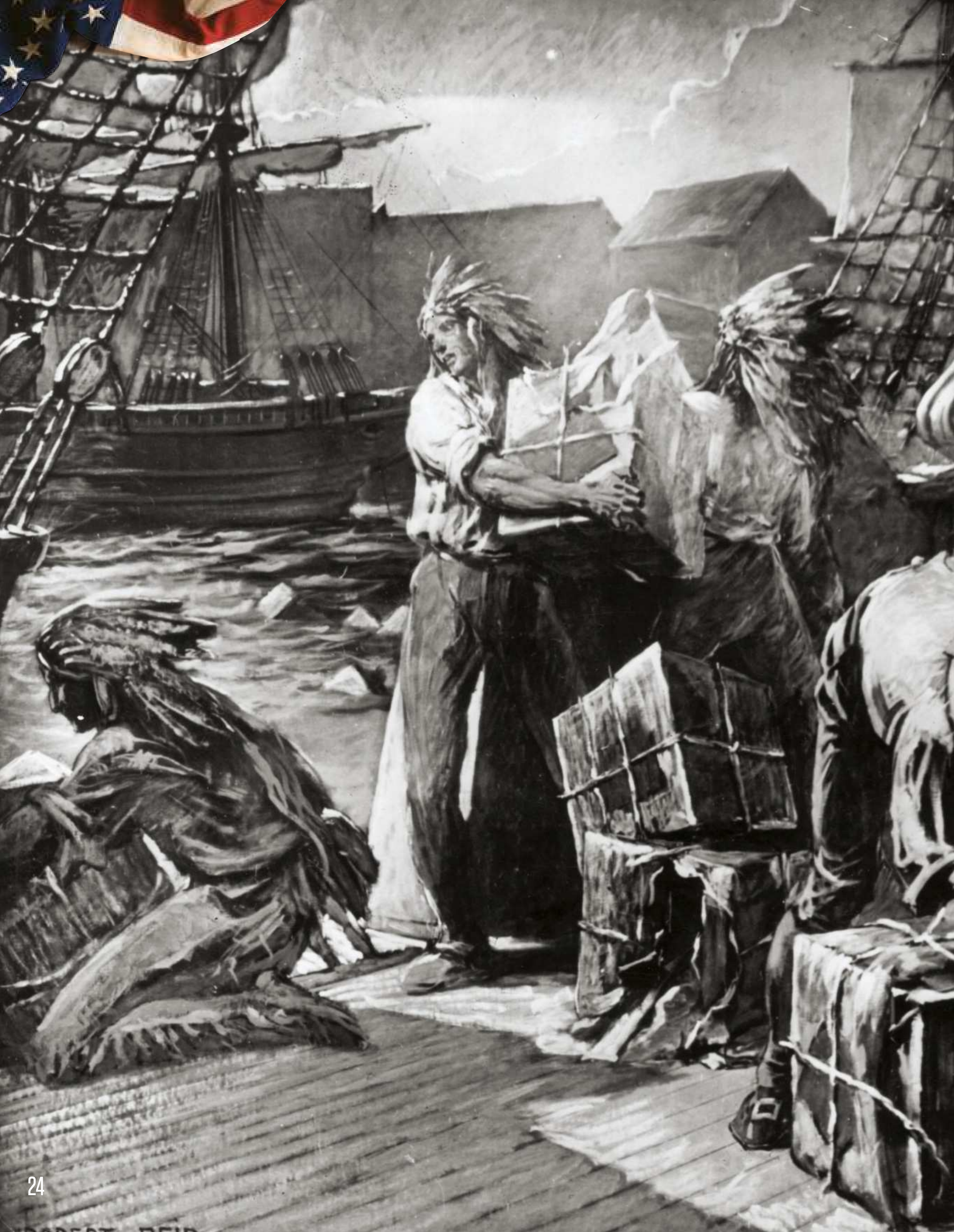
Parliament adopts the Coercive Acts

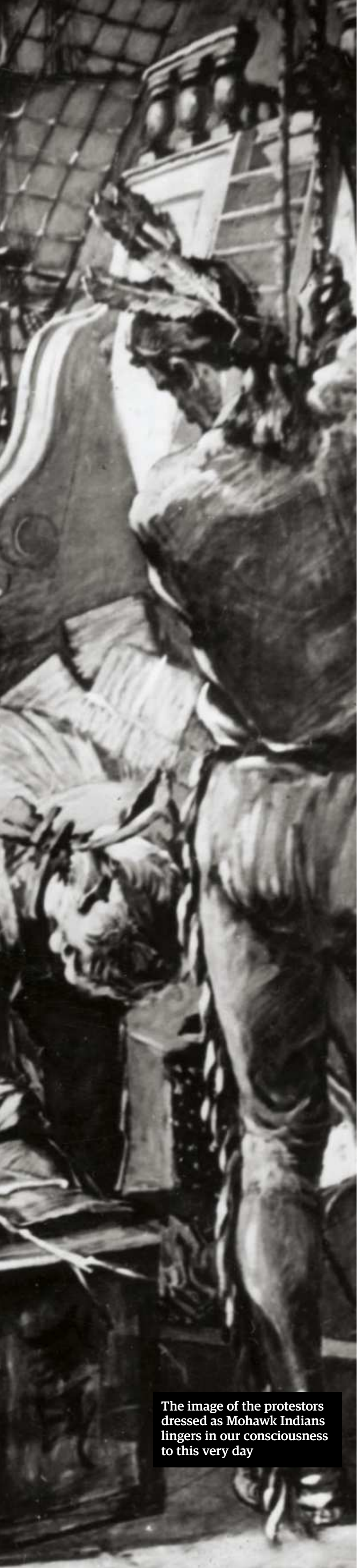
28 March 1774

In response to the Boston Tea Party and other acts of colonial defiance and civil unrest, parliament adopts the Coercive Acts. Martial law goes into effect in Boston and the port is closed to commerce, imposing hardship on the populace throughout the colony of Massachusetts, which has its charter brought under direct British control. Additionally, the royal governor is given authority to order government officials subject to justice to be tried in Britain rather than locally, while more British troops are sent to Boston with the requirement that Bostonians house them in their homes.

1774

- **Massacre soldiers at trial**
  The trial of the British soldiers of the 29th Regiment of Foot, arrested after opening fire on a violent mob during the Boston Massacre, begins with John Adams as their attorney.
  27 November 1770
- **Adams writes forcefully**
  Revolutionary activist Samuel Adams uses the pseudonym Candidus to author an essay in the *Boston Gazette*: "…If we suffer tamely a lawless attack on our liberty, we encourage it…"
  14 October 1771
- **The Pine Tree Riot**
  The enforcement of an old statute reserving Eastern White Pine timber for British shipbuilding generates days of violence and arrests of mill owners in the colony of New Hampshire.
  14 April 1772
- **Burning a tax schooner**
  The British tax schooner *Gaspee*, enforcing the Navigation Acts, runs aground at Narragansett Bay outside Warwick, Rhode Island. Colonists board the ship and put it to the torch.
  9 June 1772
- **The Boston Tea Party**
  In the best-known protest against British taxation in the colonies, the Sons of Liberty, dressed as Native Americans, board three ships in Boston Harbor and dump their cargoes of tea overboard.
  16 December 1773





The image of the protestors dressed as Mohawk Indians lingers in our consciousness to this very day

December 1773

The Boston Tea Party

How the storming of three British trade ships changed the course of history

It was on 16 December 1773 when a crowded meeting in one of Boston's largest public buildings erupted in patriotic fervour and sparked an event that would, eventually, ignite the American War of Independence. According to tradition, the meeting was interrupted by a cry from a leather-worker called Adam Collson, who is said to have declared, "Boston Harbor a teapot this night!" A roar of ascent went up from those gathered about him and around 100 men, a group "with strong backs and hard Yankee accents," according to one leading historian, dressed themselves as Native Americans and stormed three trading ships that were moored at Griffin's Wharf - the *Eleanor*, the *Beaver* and the *Dartmouth*.

With the owners refusing to sail their ships out of the harbour, the Bostonians seized the ships' cargo - 340 chests of tea - hauling them up onto the decks and splitting them open. A rich aroma filled the air (and some men, it is said, filled their pockets with the pungent leaves). Over the course of the next three hours, the men spilled out more than 40 tonnes of tea, which they then dumped into the water. This act of vandalism, which became known many years later as the Boston Tea Party, was inspired by indignation and a perceived affront to liberty; it was a statement of political disquiet rather than open revolt. Its consequences, however, would reverberate around the world.

For this was an act of international significance. The ships belonged to the British East India Company (EIC), a trading behemoth, emblematic of the empire it served, with tendrils tucked into countries all over the globe. And it was the British government's favouring of this powerhouse that provoked the events on Griffin's Wharf.

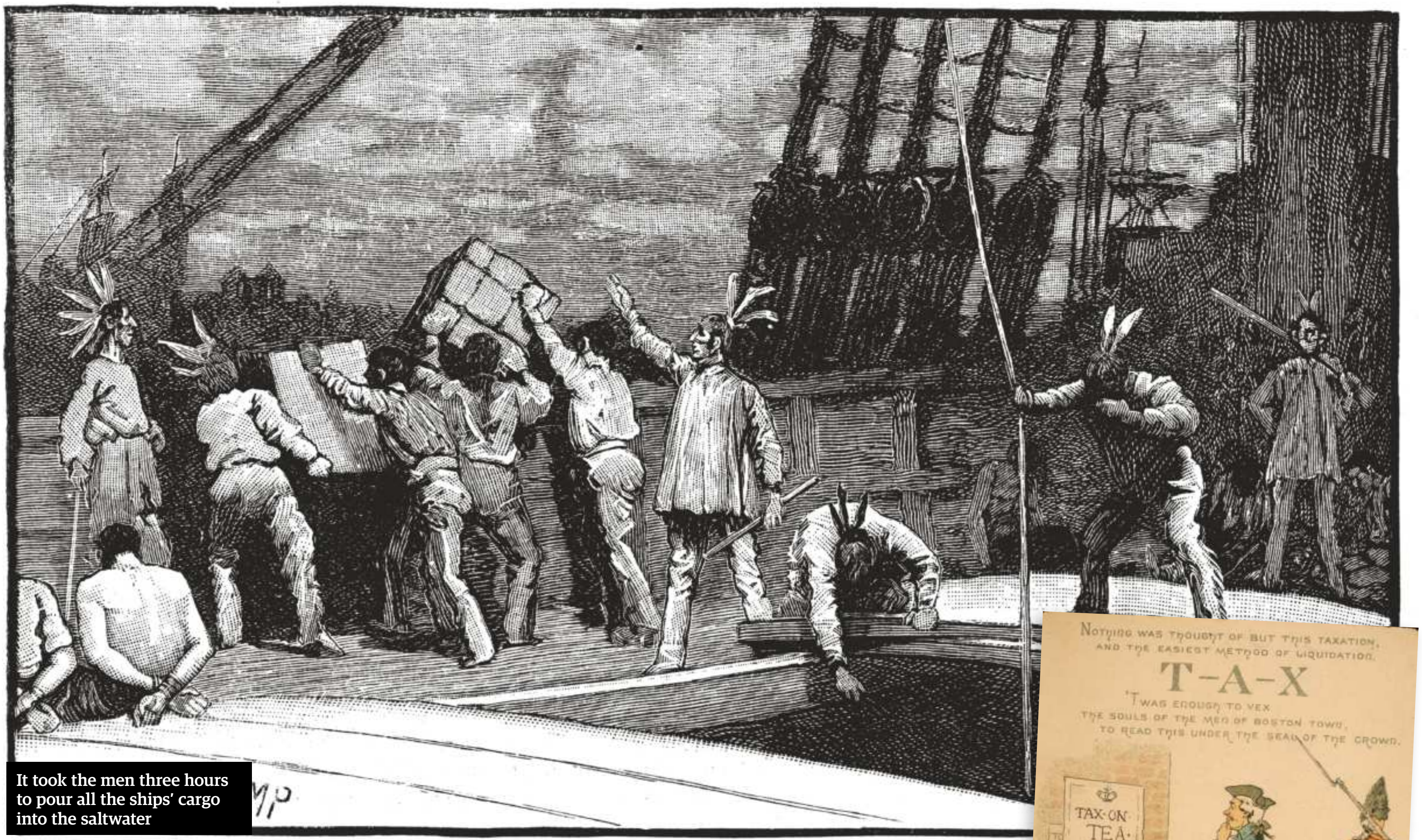
Admittedly, Boston in the late 18th century was a turbulent town, with a population that was not afraid to demonstrate its dissatisfaction through acts of public unrest. British soldiers had shot dead five Americans during the infamous Incident on King Street in 1770, when an angry mob gathered to protest against unpopular taxes. Even so, the destruction of EIC property in Boston Harbor was an extreme move.

The dissent was brewed in a pot of Britain's making, bubbling over in the wake of the British government's bid to boost the position of the EIC at the expense of the colonies. In 1773, the EIC was in financial turmoil, prompting parliament to grant the company a whopping £1.4 million loan. Then, in May of the same year, parliament passed the Tea Act, adjusting import duties in the colonies to give the EIC an absolute monopoly and thereby creating an avenue down which it could sell its surplus stocks of tea. Under the new sales levies, not even colonial smugglers could compete with the EIC.

During September 1773, the EIC shipped over 200 tonnes of tea across the Atlantic, though under pressure from patriotic groups, the consignees in Charleston, New York and Philadelphia refused to accept the shipments. After all, the Tea Act set a

> Protests against tea-drinking became so violent that one merchant burned his own cargo ship

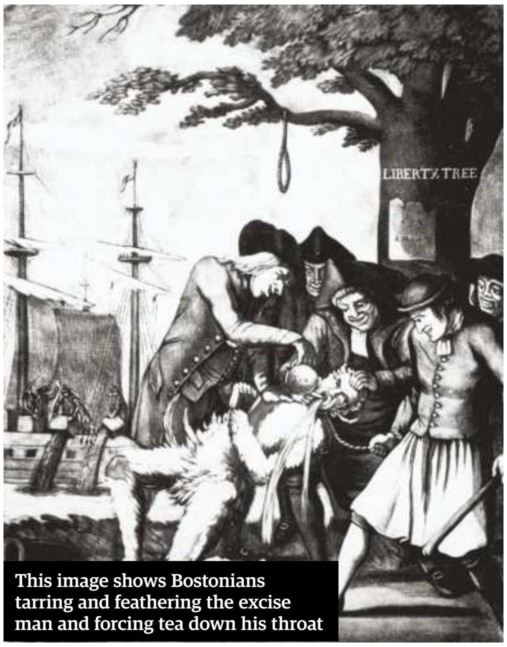
© Gettyimages



It took the men three hours to pour all the ships' cargo into the saltwater

dangerous precedent – if the British government could profit at America's expense by granting a monopoly on the sale of tea, might it not start creating new monopolies? With high prices and unfeasible taxes, the colonists would suffer.

The issue of liberty versus tyranny also loomed large. The imposition of these taxes by the British government with no discussion at a local level was, for many, a sign of the Empire's autocracy.



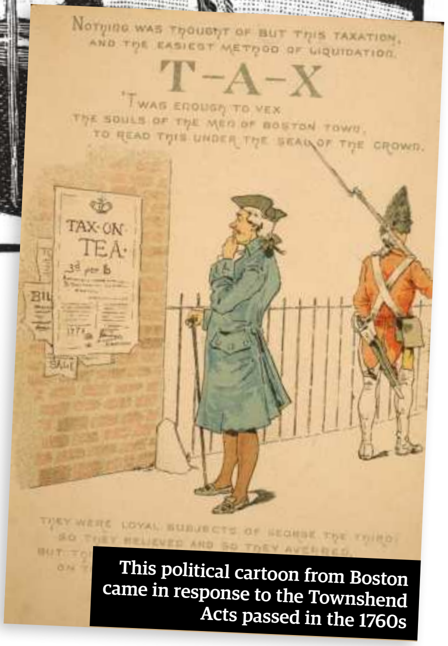
This image shows Bostonians tarring and feathering the excise man and forcing tea down his throat

Despite these arguments, and ignoring pressure from colonial lobbyists, the consignees in Boston still refused to concede and the *Eleanor*, *Beaver* and *Dartmouth* sailed their cargo into the harbour. In Boston, tension mounted. The tireless Samuel Adams, second cousin to future president John Adams, was a vocal presence, a leader among Boston's 'Sons of Liberty', and he lobbied the consignees and the governor. Still, they held firm. They would unload and sell their tea.

The night of 16 December arrived and this was a moment of significance, for on the following day, the ships' cargo was due to pass into the hands of the custom officers and the duty would be paid. Discussion and deliberation raged in Boston's Old South Meeting House – Samuel Adams chairing the debate – and it was decided that if the consignees refused to relent, then the tea would be drowned. The Bostonians were adamant: they would not pay the duty. When the decision was made and midnight loomed large, there were war whoops and shouting, an infernal noise according to one observer, and a group of men dressed as Mohawk Indians marched down to the harbour to carry out their act of destruction.

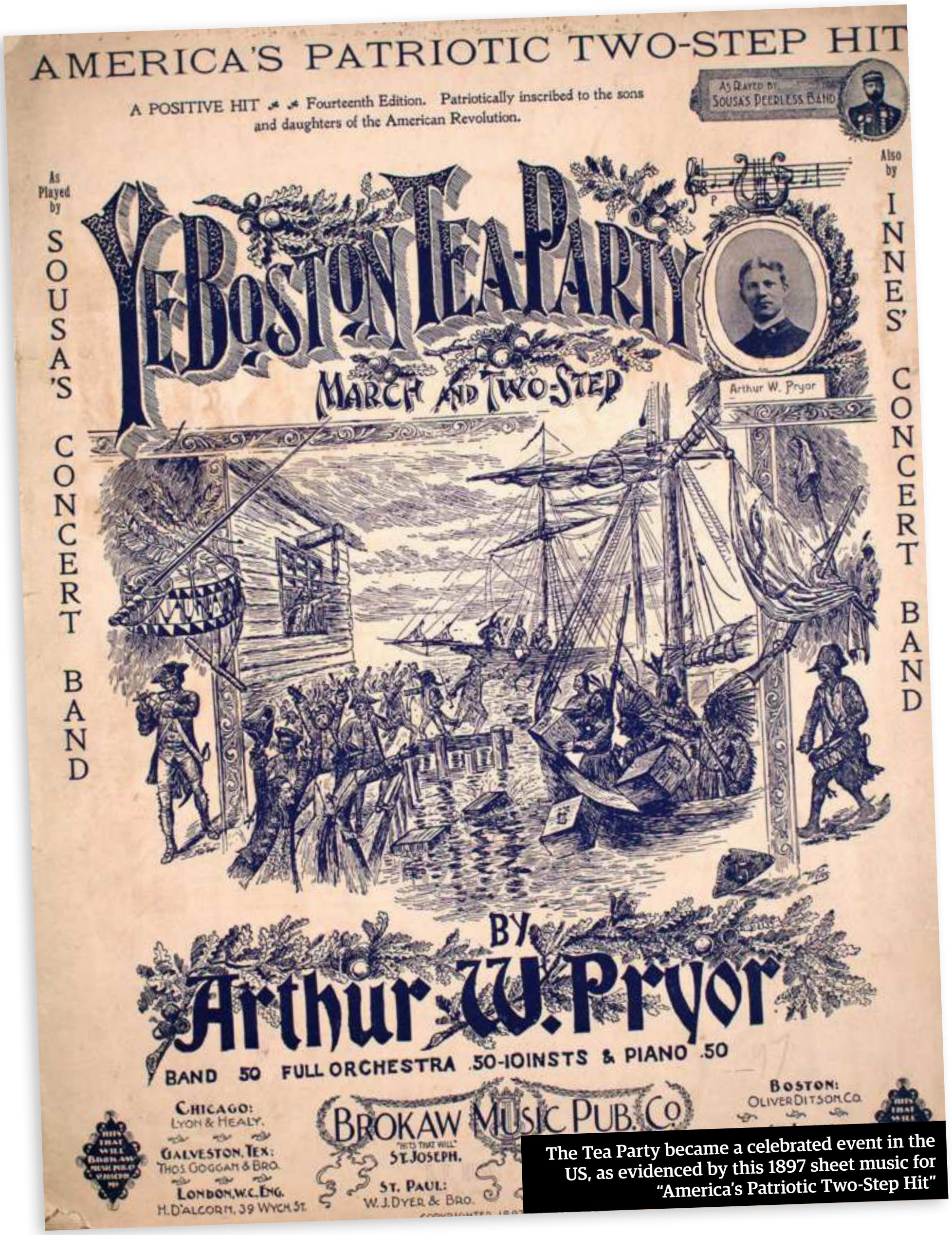
It appears that Adams did not actively participate in the dumping of the tea, but many historians believe him to be one of the architects. Whether he went to the wharf to witness the destruction remains unknown, but he worked diligently to publicise and defend the action, citing it as the only option that Bostonians had in the defence of their constitutional rights. The Tea Party was not all-out rebellion, but it set in motion the events that would lead to the American War of Independence. It was, said John Adams, "the most magnificent movement of all."

Across the Atlantic, the British government disagreed. It was outraged. Britain had, many believed, been more than fair when reacting to acts of American resistance, tempering their responses


NOTHING WAS THOUGHT OF BUT THIS TAXATION,
AND THE EASIEST METHOD OF LIQUIDATION.
T-A-X
'TWAS ENOUGH TO VEX
THE SOULS OF THE MEN OF BOSTON TOWN,
TO READ THIS UNDER THE SEAL OF THE CROWN.
TAX ON TEA
3d per lb
THEY WERE LOYAL SUBJECTS OF GEORGE THE THIRD;
SO THEY BELIEVED AND SO THEY AVERRED.

This political cartoon from Boston came in response to the Townshend Acts passed in the 1760s

"As the battle for liberty raged, many in Boston began to argue for abolition"


AMERICA'S PATRIOTIC TWO-STEP HIT
A POSITIVE HIT Fourteenth Edition. Patriotically inscribed to the sons and daughters of the American Revolution.
As Played by Sousa's Peerless Band
As Played by SOUSA'S CONCERT BAND
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YE BOSTON TEA-PARTY
MARCH AND TWO-STEP
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ST. JOSEPH.
ST. PAUL: W. J. DYER & BRO.
BOSTON: OLIVER DITSON CO.

The Tea Party became a celebrated event in the US, as evidenced by this 1897 sheet music for "America's Patriotic Two-Step Hit"

and repealing unpopular edicts, including many of the indirect taxes levied under the hated Townshend Acts. In the wake of the Tea Party assault, however, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield said that they would "temporise no longer" and parliament passed what became known as the Coercive Acts. First came the Boston Port Act of March 1774, which closed the port and demanded that the townsfolk pay for the tea that was dumped into the water. Two months later the Massachusetts Government Act received royal assent, effectively abrogating the Massachusetts Bay Colony's rights of self-government.

In the same month, the Administration of Justice Act became law - a temporary measure that granted soldiers and customs officials the power to exercise their duties without fear of conviction by colonial juries. It became known locally as the Murder Act, as Bostonians thought soldiers and officials would be able to get away with murder. The Quartering Bill, meanwhile, gave the governor power to billet soldiers in the town itself. The Coercive Acts were designed to isolate Boston from the rest of the colonies, but instead they had the opposite effect, provoking outrage across Massachusetts, and the colonies - their ardour whipped up by the likes of Adams - threw their support behind Boston. As the battle for liberty gathered pace, many in Boston began to argue for abolition. The times were changing.

Many point to the Tea Party as the seed moment of America's tradition of civil disobedience, a seminal manifestation of liberty and independence. "By reading the tea leaves at the bottom of Boston Harbor," writes one eminent scholar, "we can see the American character itself taking shape." On the flip side, it was also an act of terrorism. Nobody died during the Tea Party, but did it set a dangerous precedent? Was the rule of law to mean nothing if certain segments of the population disagreed with its tenets? The Tea Party represents a conundrum, a point to be debated. But no one could argue against its significance.

The tea dumped into Boston harbour would have been worth an estimated $1 million today

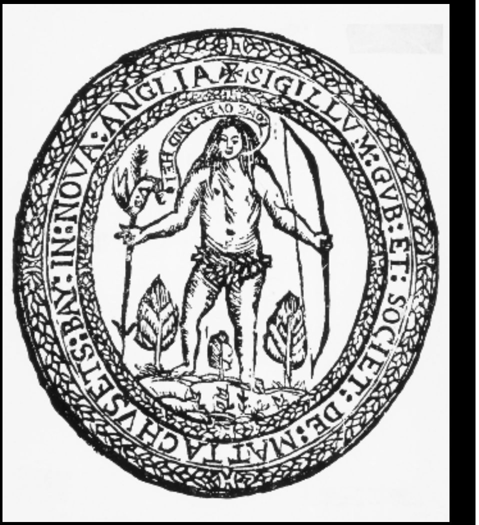
Why did they dress as natives?

Every image of the Boston Tea Party tells the same story - the tea throwers dressed as Native Americans, in the most part as Mohawks. The outfits point to the fact that the Tea Party was well planned, with those closest to its inception clad most convincingly. There were 18 'chiefs' who were expertly dressed. The men under their command disguised themselves as well as they could, some wrapping blankets around their shoulders, others just dusting their faces with soot. The disguises were myriad - and so too the reasons for their employment.

The most obvious reason was disguise, though in a town of 16,000 people, many of whom were staunch Patriots, the vast majority of the Tea Party members were well known among the townsfolk. When the soldiers came calling, however, the same townsfolk could profess ignorance, especially when ethnic minorities were such common scapegoats. That said, not even the most gullible Briton in the colonies believed that a posse of Mohawks had travelled through perilous territory to hurl tea into Boston Harbor.

Some historians believe that the adoption of Mohawk attire was a form of pageantry, and certainly the mob would have looked especially menacing. The logbook of the *Dartmouth* recorded that the assailants were "dressed and whooping like Indians", a frightening sight for the sailors.

Perhaps the most pertinent reason for the disguises was the political statement they made. The seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony featured an image of a Native American, and by dressing as such, the Tea Party participants were celebrating their uniquely American identity.


SIGILLUM GUB: ET SOCIET: DE MATTACHUSETTS BAY IN NOVA ANGLIA
COME OVER AND HELP US

The seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony

Sep-Oct 1774

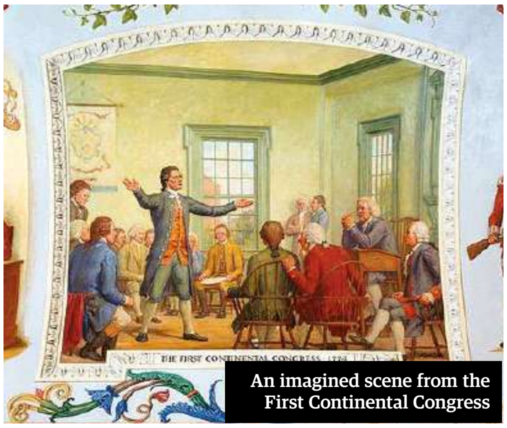
The First Continental Congress

Responding to the Coercive Acts enacted by parliament to punish Massachusetts, the First Continental Congress appealed for redress to King George III in London

When the militant Sons of Liberty, dressed as Native Americans, tossed British tea into Boston Harbor on 16 December 1773, the incident reverberated across the Atlantic to the halls of parliament. It enacted a series of punitive measures called the Coercive Acts to bring the upstart colonies, particularly Massachusetts, back into line. Nearly a decade of British taxation, intended to defray expenses related to the maintenance of a standing army in America and recover costs associated with the prosecution of the French and Indian War, elicited an increasingly united opposition from the restive colonies.

Fifty-six representatives from 12 of the 13 colonies convened at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia on 5 September 1774, to present a response to the acts that had closed the port of Boston, enacted martial law in Massachusetts, required colonists to house British soldiers in their private homes and given immunity to representatives of the British Crown who had been charged with crimes in the colonies. Prior to the First Continental Congress, as the meeting was called, colonial responses to parliamentary measures had been coordinated primarily through committees of correspondence.

In the midst of a Native American uprising, Georgia depended on British support and did not send delegates to Congress



An imagined scene from the First Continental Congress

Delegates to the First Continental Congress included many of the Founding Fathers of the United States, including George Washington of Virginia, John Adams and Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, and John Jay of New York. Virginian Peyton Randolph was named its president. Perspectives on the purpose and goals of the gathering varied greatly, from simply formulating a rational response to the Coercive Acts and fostering reconciliation with the London government, to curbing the outright authority of parliament in the colonies and even the development of a new colonial government that was separate and independent from Great Britain.

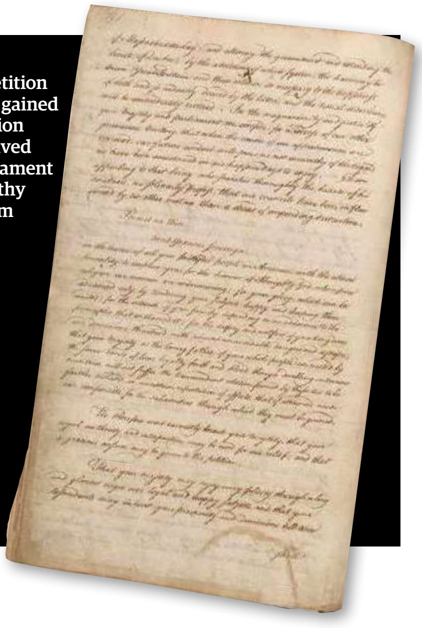
For 51 days, the delegates debated an appropriate response to the Coercive Acts. Fiery Virginian Patrick Henry rose and argued that the time had come to assert independence, since colonial government had already been usurped.

The long journey of the Petition

On 2 November 1774, the cargo ship *Britannia* set sail from the port of Philadelphia. Aboard was the petition drafted during the First Continental Congress for presentation to King George III, with the hope that the Coercive Acts would be repealed and good relations between the Crown and the colonies restored. Soon afterwards, *Britannia* encountered an Atlantic storm and was forced to return to port with the document, now waterlogged and illegible, still aboard. A replacement copy departed Philadelphia on the ship *Mary and Elizabeth* on 6 November, arriving safely in London eight days later.

British prime minister Lord North presented the petition to parliament on 19 January 1775, but Benjamin Franklin observed three weeks later that it was among "…a great Heap of letters of Intelligence from Governors and officers in America, Newspapers, Pamphlets, Handbills, etc., from that Country, the last in the List, and was laid upon the Table with them, undistinguished by any particular Recommendation of it to the Notice of either House; and I do not find, that it has had any further notice taken of it as yet, than that it has been read as well as the other Papers".

King George did not respond.



The 1774 Petition to the King gained little attention when it arrived before parliament after a lengthy journey from America

"Government is dissolved," he asserted. "Fleets and armies and the present state of things show that government is dissolved. Where are your landmarks, your boundaries of colonies? We are in a state of nature, sir!"

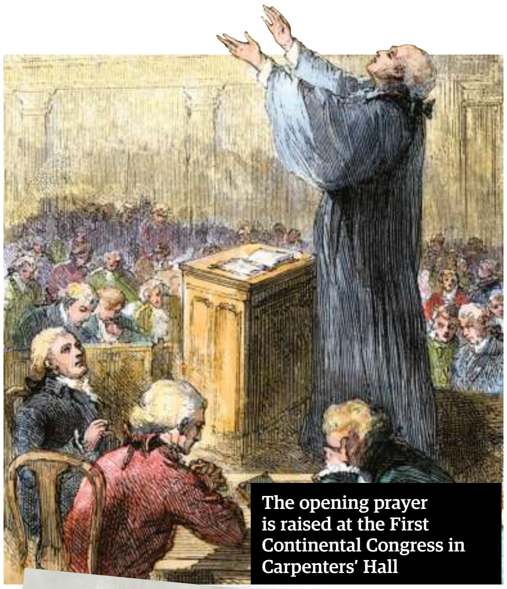
The majority of the delegates were not yet ready to claim separation from the Crown, but on 17 September, they deemed the Coercive Acts as oppressive and that they were "not to be obeyed". The Congress also moved for the formation of colonial militia, and a series of resolutions prompted the most concerted actions among colonial leaders yet to emerge in the deepening crisis with Great Britain.

The First Continental Congress produced the Articles of Association, an agreement to boycott the purchase of goods imported from Britain, effective 1 December 1774. The formation of committees of inspection and observation would ensure compliance with the legislated boycott. Further, the Coercive Acts - known in the colonies as the 'Intolerable Acts' - should be repealed by 10 September 1775, or the colonies would cease the export of goods to Britain. A Declaration of Rights was also approved, confirming the loyalty of the colonists as British subjects but disputing the right of parliament to levy taxes in America.

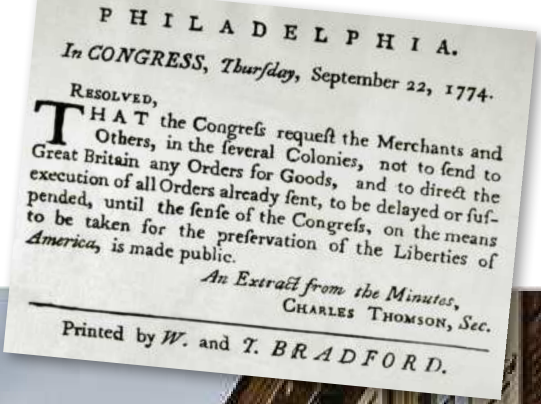
On 1 October 1774, the delegates approved a resolution to petition King George III, stating unanimously "that loyal address to his Majesty be prepared, dutifully requesting the royal attention to the grievances that alarm his Majesty's faithful subjects in North America, and entreating his Majesty's gracious interposition for the removal of such grievances, thereby to restore between Great Britain and the colonies the harmony so necessary to the happiness of the British empire, and so ardently desired by all America".

The resolution was drafted and approved in late October, stressing that with the repeal of the Coercive Acts, relations between Britain and the colonies would be greatly improved. In early 1775, the petition came before parliament, but received little attention.

The delegates agreed to meet a second time the following May and adjourned on 26 October 1774. Meanwhile, the boycott was enacted and imports from Great Britain to the colonies dropped precipitously in the months that followed. With the exception of New York, the colonial assemblies approved the actions of the First Continental Congress. The deadline for the cessation of exports to Great Britain was never reached. War had erupted several months earlier.



The opening prayer is raised at the First Continental Congress in Carpenters' Hall



PHILADELPHIA.

In CONGRESS, Thurſday, September 22, 1774.

RESOLVED,

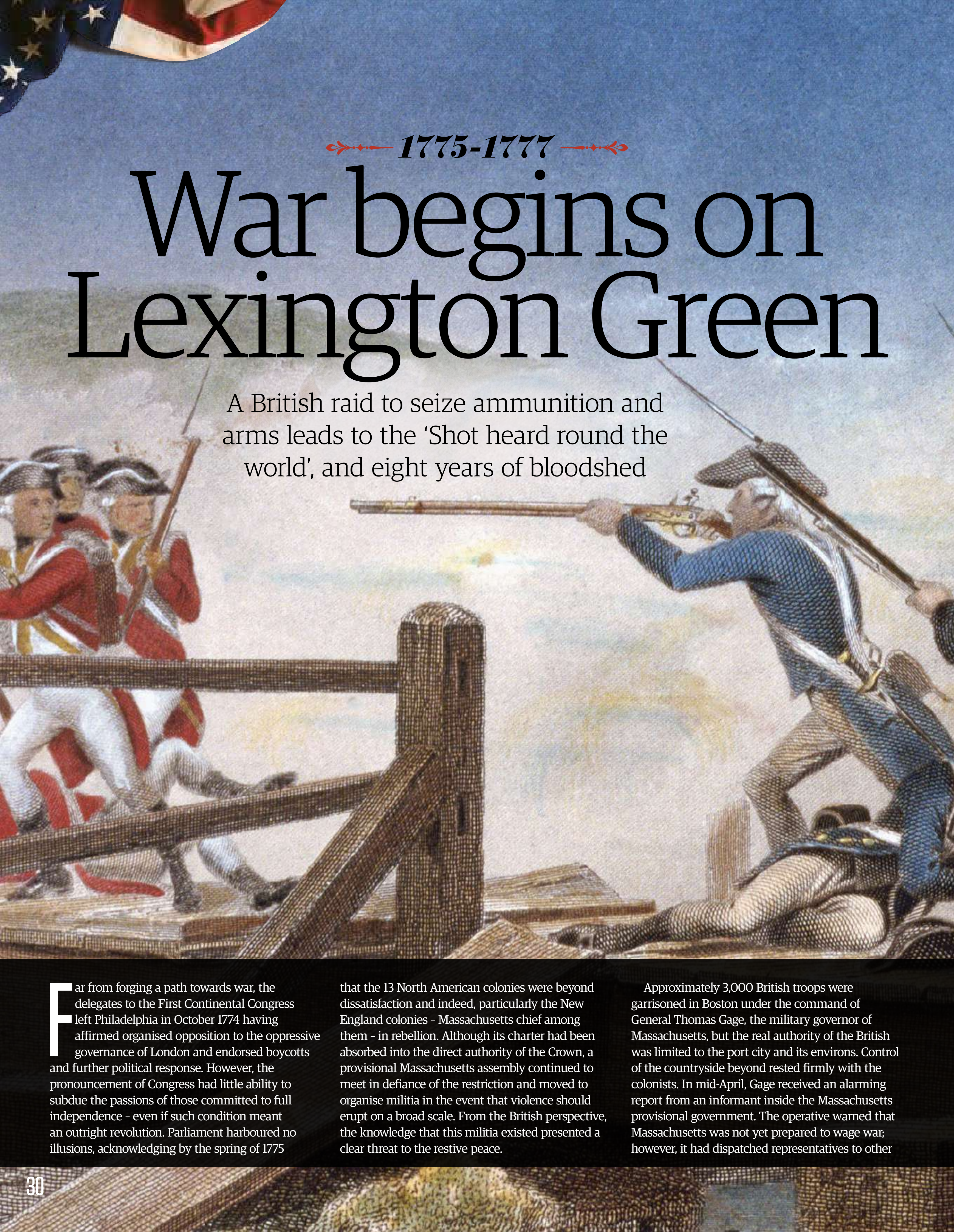
THAT the Congreſs requeſt the Merchants and Others, in the ſeveral Colonies, not to ſend to Great Britain any Orders for Goods, and to direct the execution of all Orders already ſent, to be delayed or ſuſpended, until the ſenſe of the Congreſs, on the means to be taken for the preſervation of the Liberties of *America*, is made public.

An Extract from the Minutes,
CHARLES THOMSON, *Sec.*

Printed by *W.* and *T.* BRADFORD.

After Peyton Randolph became ill, South Carolina's Henry Middleton presided over the First Continental Congress

Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia was the scene of the First Continental Congress in the autumn of 1774



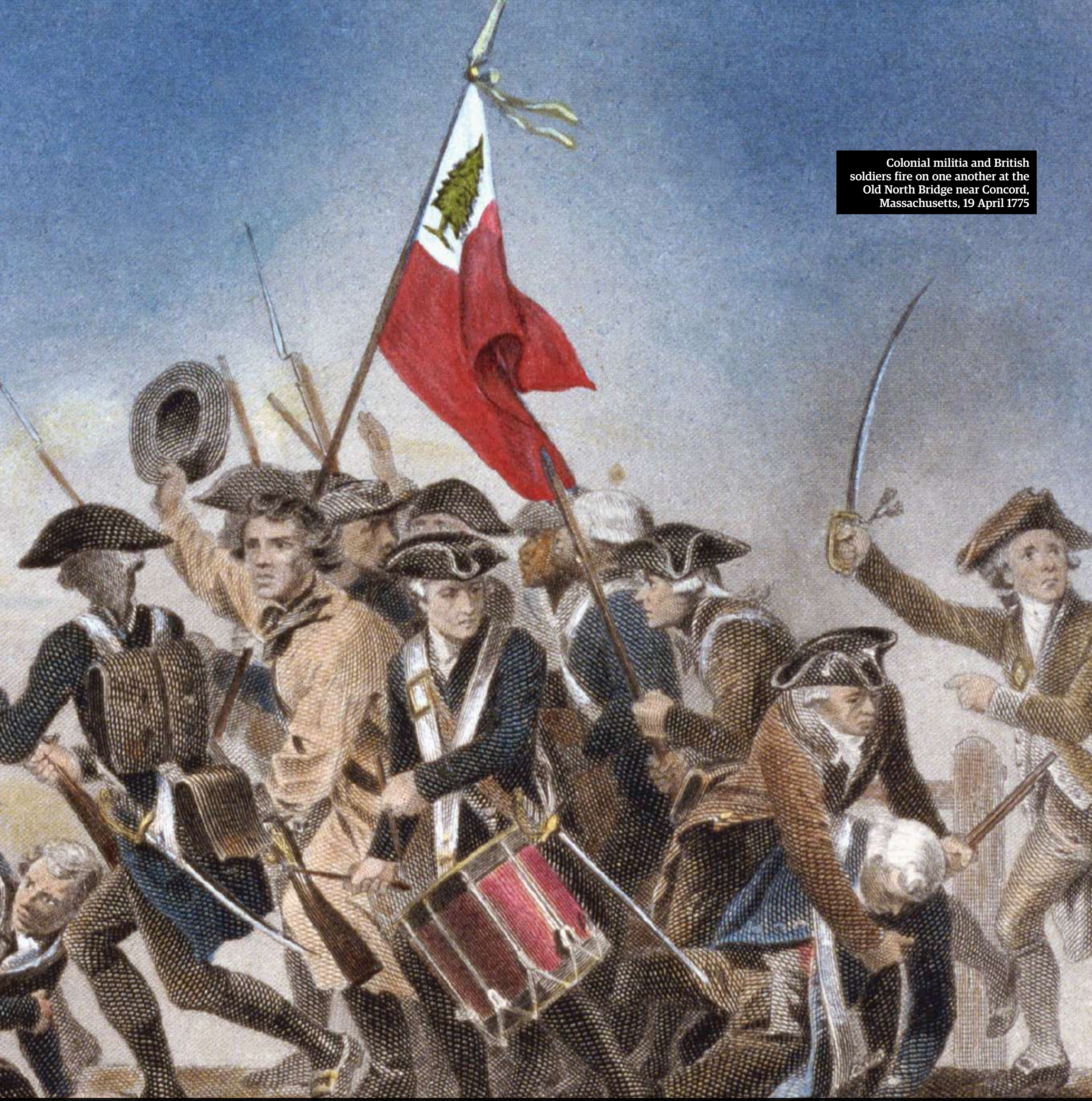
1775-1777

War begins on Lexington Green

A British raid to seize ammunition and arms leads to the 'Shot heard round the world', and eight years of bloodshed

Far from forging a path towards war, the delegates to the First Continental Congress left Philadelphia in October 1774 having affirmed organised opposition to the oppressive governance of London and endorsed boycotts and further political response. However, the pronouncement of Congress had little ability to subdue the passions of those committed to full independence - even if such condition meant an outright revolution. Parliament harboured no illusions, acknowledging by the spring of 1775 that the 13 North American colonies were beyond dissatisfaction and indeed, particularly the New England colonies - Massachusetts chief among them - in rebellion. Although its charter had been absorbed into the direct authority of the Crown, a provisional Massachusetts assembly continued to meet in defiance of the restriction and moved to organise militia in the event that violence should erupt on a broad scale. From the British perspective, the knowledge that this militia existed presented a clear threat to the restive peace.

Approximately 3,000 British troops were garrisoned in Boston under the command of General Thomas Gage, the military governor of Massachusetts, but the real authority of the British was limited to the port city and its environs. Control of the countryside beyond rested firmly with the colonists. In mid-April, Gage received an alarming report from an informant inside the Massachusetts provisional government. The operative warned that Massachusetts was not yet prepared to wage war; however, it had dispatched representatives to other



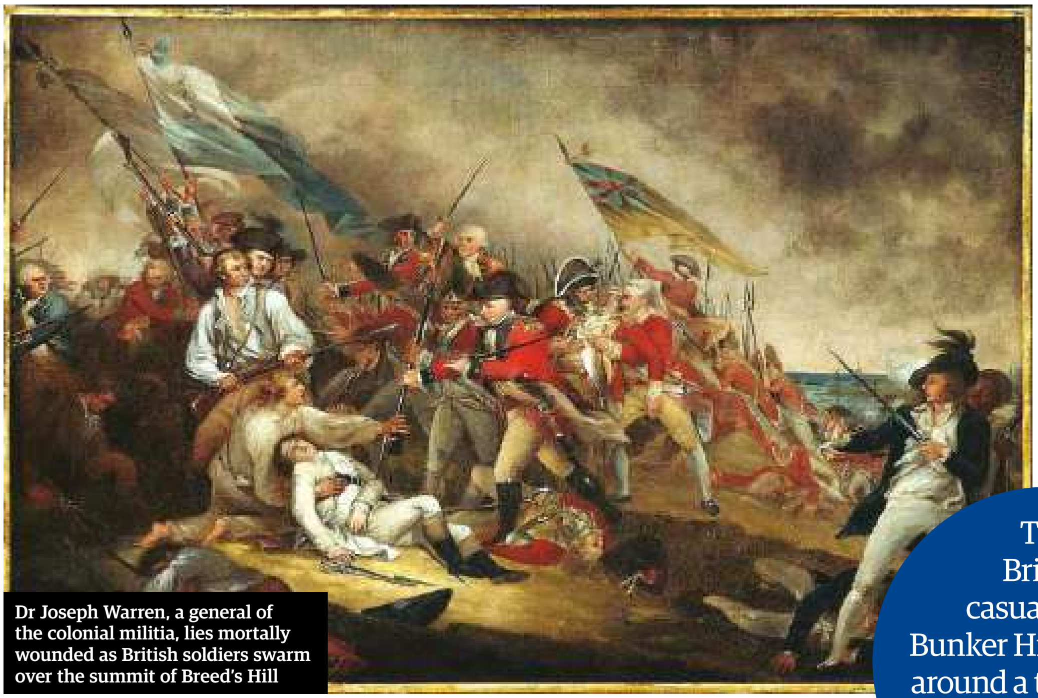
Colonial militia and British soldiers fire on one another at the Old North Bridge near Concord, Massachusetts, 19 April 1775

© Getty

New England colonies to evaluate their willingness to provide militiamen that would raise a colonial army of up to 18,000. He felt compelled to act. Seizures of colonial military stores had occurred before, such as the so-called Powder Alarm of September 1774. Now, a movement to seize weapons and ammunition at Concord, a few kilometres outside Boston, seemed both prudent and necessary. The colonials knew that a raid was coming and correctly surmised that Concord was the target. On the night of 18 April 1775, Paul Revere, William Dawes and Samuel Prescott were among several men who rode through the city and surrounding area to rouse militiamen, known as minutemen because of their swift response to peril, in order to confront the British expedition.

Early on 19 April 1775, a force of 700 light infantry and grenadiers, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith of the 10th Regiment of Foot, set out for Concord. In the vanguard of Smith's expedition, Major John Pitcairn, a Scottish officer of Royal Marines, confronted a band of 78 militiamen on the village green at Lexington about 16 kilometres northwest of Boston, just as the sun was rising.

On horseback, Pitcairn bellowed: "Disperse, ye rebels! I say disperse! Lay down your arms ye damned rebels!" Within seconds, a shot rang out. No one is certain which side fired first. But the result is surely known. Eight militiamen lay dead, and ten wounded. Only one British soldier was slightly injured. The British reportedly fired multiple volleys as the rebels ran for their lives, and then continued towards Concord.



Dr Joseph Warren, a general of the colonial militia, lies mortally wounded as British soldiers swarm over the summit of Breed's Hill

By the time the redcoats reached the North Bridge at Concord, a force of 400 militiamen had assembled to confront about 100 soldiers, as the British had divided into companies to search for weapons and gunpowder. Shots were exchanged, and the British concentrated again for the march back to Boston. Harried along the way as colonials fired at them from behind trees, rock walls and houses, the British retirement became a full-scale retreat. Gage sent reinforcements from Boston, and when the soldiers finally reached safety, they counted 73 dead and 174 wounded, while 49 militiamen had been killed and 39 injured.

The following morning, in a tremendous show of force and surprising organisation, 15,000 armed militia had surrounded Boston on three sides. Within days, the Second Continental Congress authorised the formation of the Continental Army and commissioned Virginian George Washington, who had worn his militia uniform to the proceedings and obviously lobbied for the job, to command the upstart force. In mid-June, Gage initiated a military effort to break the tenuous siege. His army had 6,000 regulars, which he believed was more than enough to deal with relatively untrained farmers and labourers who had only recently taken up muskets.

To take the high ground across the Charlestown Peninsula, Gage ordered Major General William Howe to lead 1,500 troops up Breed's Hill and nearby Bunker Hill. The colonists knew of the offensive beforehand and had already occupied the heights with 1,200 men. On 17 June 1775, the British infantry formed up in long lines, four soldiers deep, and began marching up Breed's Hill. The militiamen levelled their muskets, some steadying their aim along a rail fence, but ammunition was low before the shooting started.

Colonel William Prescott watched the awe-inspiring advance and steadied his men, saying: "Don't fire until I tell you. Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes!" Then, a brutal volley was unleashed from the rebel muskets. The British ranks were riddled. The bodies of dead and wounded soldiers littered the slope. Only after three assaults were the rebels driven from the summit of Breed's Hill. The Battle of Bunker Hill, as the engagement became known, was a Pyrrhic victory for the British, with 226 killed and 828 wounded, while the militia lost 115 dead and 305 wounded. British General Henry Clinton lamented the toll and wrote that Bunker Hill was "…a dear bought victory, another such would have ruined us".

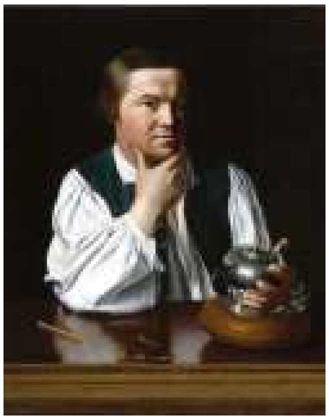
The British casualties at Bunker Hill equalled around a third of the troops engaged - an unsustainable rate of loss

"The British ranks were riddled. The bodies of dead soldiers littered the slope"

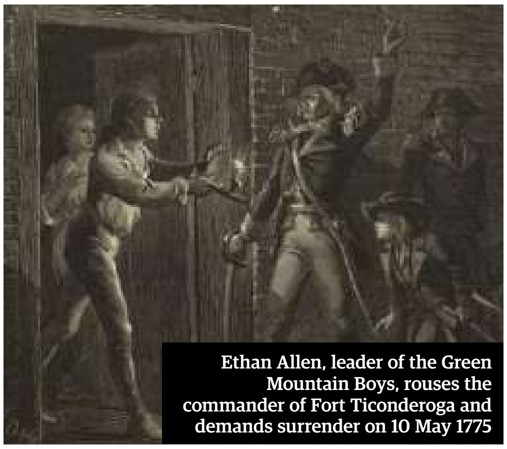
Defining moment

Paul Revere's ride

18 April 1775



Paul Revere is one of numerous riders dispatched on the night of 18 April 1775, to warn that the British Army is moving against rebel ammunition and weapons stores at Concord, outside Boston. Revere is summoned to the home of Dr Joseph Warren, who asks that Revere ride to Lexington to warn Samuel Adams and John Hancock that their arrest might be imminent. Revere, William Dawes and Samuel Prescott, the best-known riders, are detained by British soldiers, but Dawes and Prescott manage to escape. Revere is later released, although his horse is confiscated. Prescott manages to alert the militia in the vicinity of Concord.



Ethan Allen, leader of the Green Mountain Boys, rouses the commander of Fort Ticonderoga and demands surrender on 10 May 1775

Timeline

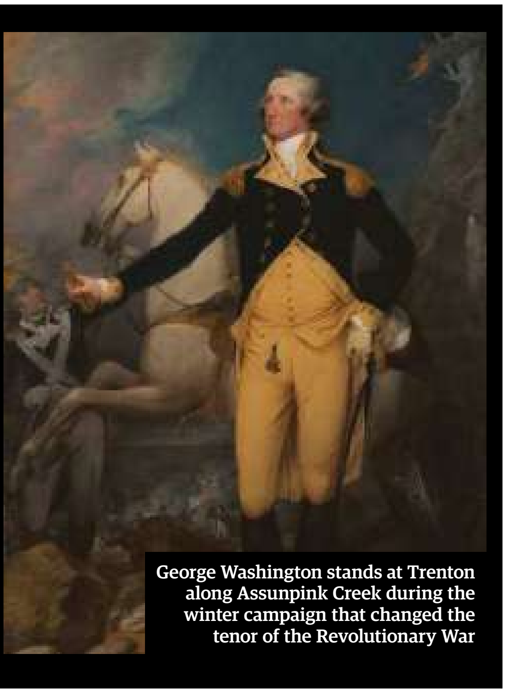
1774

- **First Continental Congress convenes**
  The First Continental Congress gathers in Philadelphia to deliberate on the current state of unrest. Six months later, hostilities break out between the North American colonies and the British Crown.
  5 September 1774
- **Patrick Henry thunders his conviction**
  At the Second Virginia Convention in Richmond, Patrick Henry bellows: "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"
  23 March 1775
- **The shot heard round the world**
  Colonial militia clash with British soldiers at Lexington and Concord in the opening skirmishes of the American Revolution, and a day-long, running fight ensues as the British retire to Boston.
  19 April 1775
- **Taking a fortress**
  Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold lead militia known as the Green Mountain Boys in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga on the southern shore of Lake Champlain in upstate New York.
  10 May 1775
- **Second Continental Congress**
  The Second Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia days after the first shots of the Revolutionary War are fired and subsequently remains in session through much of the conflict, disbanding in 1781.
  10 May 1775
- **Washington named commander**
  George Washington, an experienced officer of Virginia militia and veteran of the French and Indian War, is given command of the Continental Army. He retains the position throughout the Revolutionary War.
  15 June 1775

Washington's daring gambit

Desperate times often call for desperate measures, and George Washington felt compelled to act in the winter of 1776-1777. He managed to hold his Continental Army together with appeals to its revolutionary fervour as a trickle of supplies provided sustenance. Above all, a military victory would re-energise the pervasive flagging hopes for independence. From winter quarters in Pennsylvania, Washington perceived an opportunity for a bold strike across the Delaware River in New Jersey. General Howe and the British Army had gone into winter quarters in New York and established several garrisons of German mercenary troops - or Hessians - among towns in New Jersey. Washington believed these outposts were vulnerable, and on the night of 25 December 1776, his army crossed the ice-clogged Delaware River, arriving the following morning at Trenton to surprise the Hessian force there. The Americans captured 900 soldiers, while 22 Hessians were killed and 83 wounded. Only two Americans were killed, and five wounded. Stores of weapons and ammunition were also captured. The electrifying victory energised the heartbeat of the rebellion.

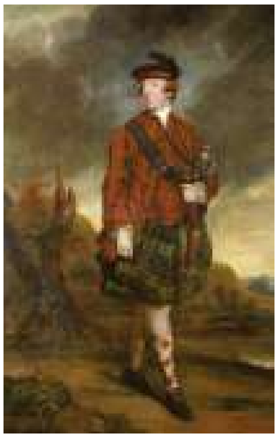
By 3 January 1777, Washington had crossed the Delaware again and defeated the British Army under Lord Charles Cornwallis that had been sent to subdue him at the Battle of Assunpink Creek. Three times the British failed to break rebel lines. Hours later, Washington sidestepped around Cornwallis and attacked the British garrison at Princeton, New Jersey. The third British defeat in eight days forced Cornwallis to retire. Washington's desperate gamble had paid off handsomely. With the revolutionary cause rejuvenated, the Continental Army went into winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey.


George Washington stands at Trenton along Assunpink Creek during the winter campaign that changed the tenor of the Revolutionary War

Washington, meanwhile, stepped up the pressure on the British in Boston. On the recommendation of General Henry Knox, he ordered that the artillery captured in early May be moved by oxen over mountainous terrain to Dorchester Heights and other high ground around the city. The arduous but successful operation threatened British supply lines, and General Howe, having relieved Gage in October 1775, withdrew his command from Boston in March 1776. Within weeks, the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence.

But Howe was soon on the move. While Washington repositioned his army - now numbering around 19,000 troops - to New York City to defend the major port that might be used by the British as a base for further operations, Howe embarked from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and landed at Staten Island. The British Army, now 32,000 strong, put Washington's command to flight with a flanking manoeuvre at the Battle of Long Island on 27 August, and then completed the successful New York campaign with victories at White Plains and Fort Washington.

Forced to give up his defence of New York City, Washington evacuated positions at Brooklyn Heights and later retreated across New Jersey and into eastern Pennsylvania. Howe consolidated his hold on New York by the end of September. For the rebels, the lustre of the Boston triumph was replaced with the spectre of defeat. The viability of the Continental Army was in jeopardy. The recent setbacks had deflated morale, enlistments were expiring and desertions were common. Washington was at a crossroads of command.

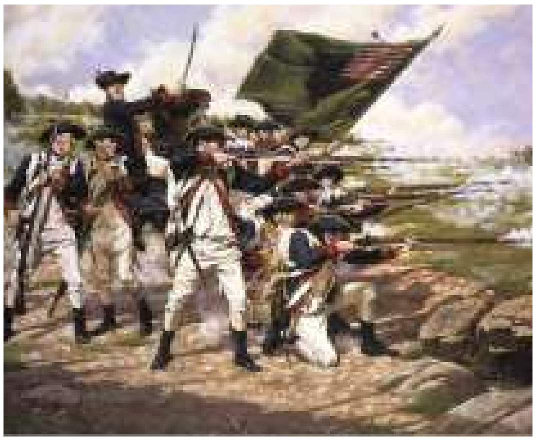


Defining moment

The Burning of Norfolk

1 January 1776

Orders from John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore and Royal Governor of Virginia, lead to the seizure of colonial gunpowder stores at Williamsburg, Virginia, and later to warships of the British Royal Navy shelling the port town of Norfolk. While the loyalist population of Norfolk has already fled the town, rebel militia from Virginia and North Carolina drive off British landing parties but take no action to douse spreading fires. In fact, they begin looting and setting fire to the homes and property of the local loyalist merchants. Fires rage virtually unchecked for three days, destroying most of the town.



Defining moment

Battle Of Long Island

27 August 1776

During the first major battle of the Revolutionary War following the American Declaration of Independence, British forces under General William Howe, after landing at Staten Island, inflict a serious defeat on the Continental Army under George Washington, killing or wounding 1,100 men and capturing nearly the same number. Howe fixes Washington's position with an attack at Guan Heights, while his main army marches around the Continental flank, causing panic among the rebels, who flee in disarray. Four hundred Maryland militia stand firm and prevent an even greater catastrophe during the retreat to defensive positions at Brooklyn Heights. Washington later withdraws.

- **Battle Of Bunker Hill**
  British troops win a costly victory, taking high ground around Boston at Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill, but fail to exploit the gain, partially due to the heavy casualties they have sustained.
  17 June 1775
- **Burial of General Richard Montgomery**
  The British bury General Richard Montgomery, killed during the Battle of Quebec - the decisive action of an abortive campaign in Canada that results in disastrous defeat for the Continental Army.
  4 January 1776
- **British evacuate Boston**
  British forces evacuate Boston aboard Royal Navy ships after General William Howe determines that their supply lines are threatened by the presence of rebel artillery moved from Fort Ticonderoga.
  17 March 1776
- **The Declaration Of Independence**
  The Second Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence, authored principally by Thomas Jefferson, which articulates the grievances of the 13 colonies and the rationale for separation from the British Crown.
  4 July 1776
- **Victory at Trenton**
  After crossing the Delaware River on Christmas night, George Washington's army surprises the Hessians at Trenton, New Jersey, winning a small but nevertheless significant victory that buoys the morale of his troops.
  26 December 1776
- **Winter quarters At Morristown**
  Following a string of military successes at Trenton, Assunpink Creek and Princeton, the Continental Army, under its charismatic leader, General George Washington, survives to enter winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey.
  6 January 1777

1775-1781

The Second Continental Congress

The Second Continental Congress evolved into the government of the former colonies during the war for independence from Great Britain

As had been resolved at the close of its predecessor, the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia on 10 May 1775. It would remain in session during much of the next six years, the turbulent period of the American Revolution. Many of its delegates were returning; however, among its notable new participants were Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, John Hancock of Massachusetts, and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. Although Peyton Randolph was elected to preside, he was recalled to Virginia within days, and Jefferson attended as his replacement. Hancock succeeded Randolph as president. Twelve of the 13 colonies were initially represented as Georgia wavered, and then sent delegates who arrived two months later.

In Baltimore, Congress convened at Henry Fite's Tavern, some distance away from British Royal Navy ships

Although it was originally intended to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures passed during the First Continental Congress and to consider the state of affairs between the colonies and the British Crown, the Revolutionary War had begun three weeks prior to its opening session. Therefore, the Second Continental Congress developed into the wartime government of the colonies. Without precedent or tangible authorisation, the Congress took upon itself the functions of government, raising an army, appointing and dispatching ambassadors to foreign countries, entering into treaties and printing its own currency. Each of these endeavours was critical to the future of the Revolution and the new nation.

The early conduct of the war had been managed on a haphazard basis, and on 14 July 1775, Congress authorised the formation of the Continental Army. Virginia delegate George Washington, who wore his uniform of the state's militia to lobby for the appointment, was named its commanding general. Still, there was a forlorn hope for reconciliation and avoidance of war with the Olive Branch Petition, approved in early July by Congress but rebuffed by King George III. Concurrently, Congress approved the Declaration of the Causes and the Necessity of Taking Up Arms, delineating the colonial rationale for separation.

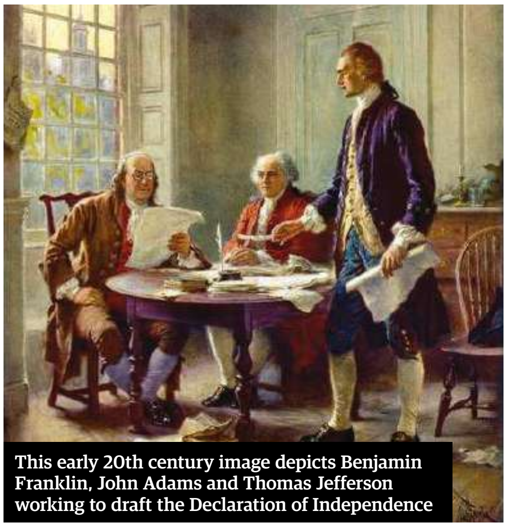
During the succeeding months, the focus of colonial ire shifted somewhat from a disdain for parliament to an open indictment of the king himself, since it had become apparent that parliament had acted with the monarch's approval. By the spring of 1776, Congress had moved decidedly towards separation, passing a resolution on 10 May encouraging those colonies whose governments were reluctant to endorse independence to reconstitute governments that were favourable to the concept. On 15 May, the Virginia Convention sent word to its delegates in Philadelphia that the former authority of the king and parliament had been dissolved in Virginia.

On 7 June 1776, Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee rose and introduced a resolution to declare the colonies independent. Four days later, Congress appointed a 'Committee of Five' - Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson - to write the Declaration of Independence. Other committees were chosen to draft the coming Articles of Confederation, the young nation's first somewhat comprehensive governmental document, and the Plan of 1776 - or Model Treaty - intended for the conduct of international relations.

The Declaration was ratified by Congress on 4 July 1776 and published the following day, followed by the Model Treaty and the appointment of envoys to France on 24-25 September, and the Articles of Confederation on 15 November 1777, following a year of intense debate. The Articles would require more than three years of additional deliberation in the assemblies of each new state before Maryland became the last to affirm on 2 February 1781.

During its tenure, the Second Continental Congress was forced by the exigencies of war to flee Philadelphia twice before the advancing British Army, first to Baltimore in the winter of 1776 and then to Lancaster and York, Pennsylvania, in September 1777, returning to Philadelphia in early July of the following year.

The Second Continental Congress adjourned on 1 March 1781, less than a month after the ratification of the Articles of Confederation by the state assemblies. As the de facto government of the new United States, the breadth of its accomplishments was remarkable, maintaining a semblance of order amid the heightened uncertainty of war with a great power, concluding an alliance with France that ultimately ensured victory during the revolution, and undertaking the creation of an enduring form of representative government.



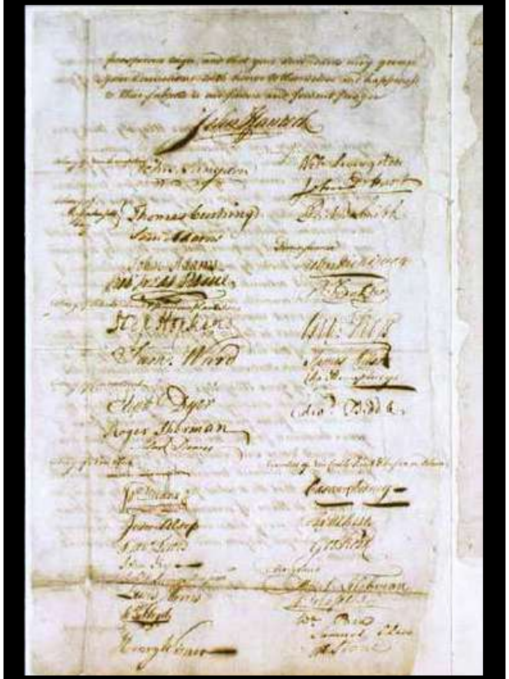
This early 20th century image depicts Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson working to draft the Declaration of Independence

Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was debated and adopted

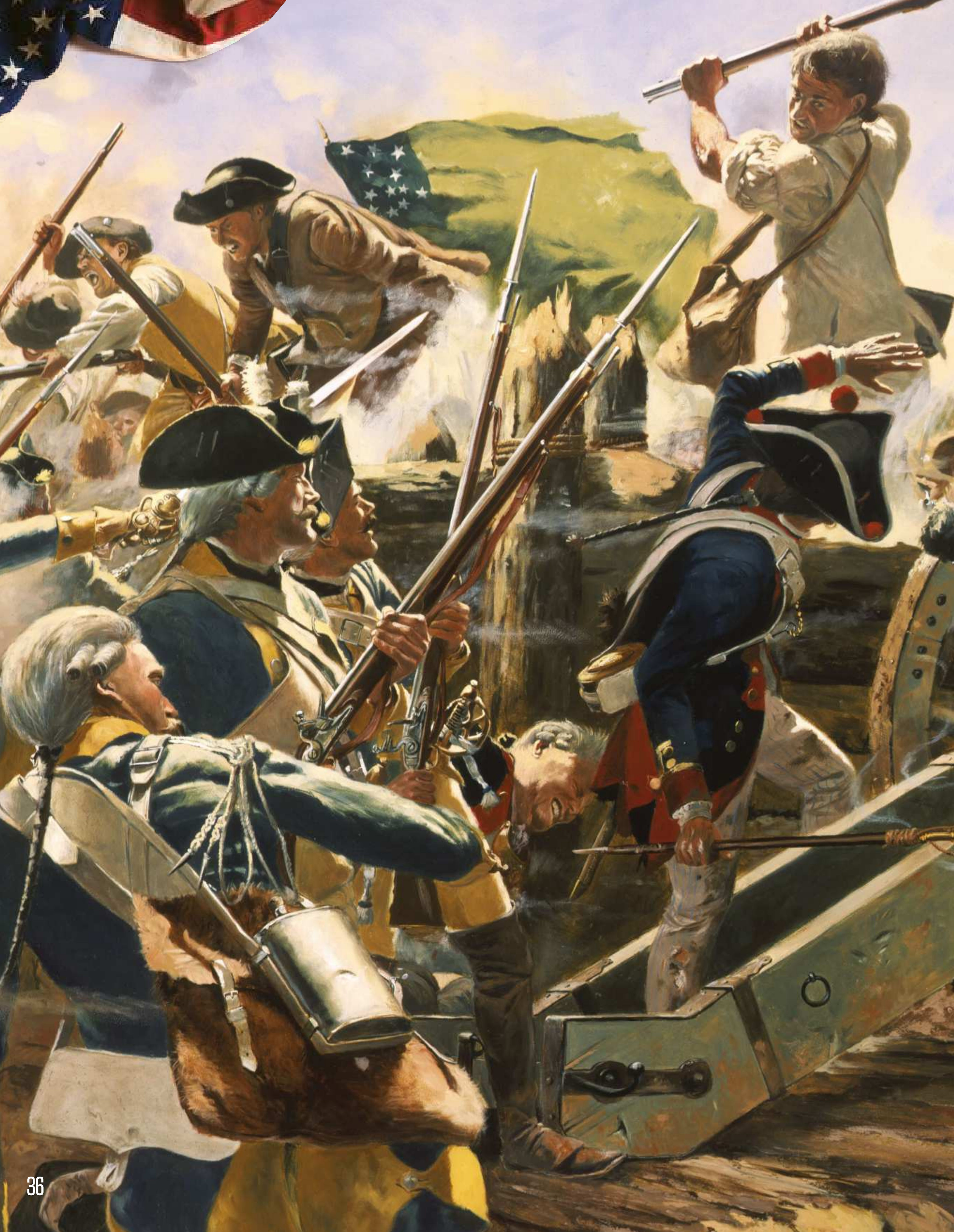
The Olive Branch Petition

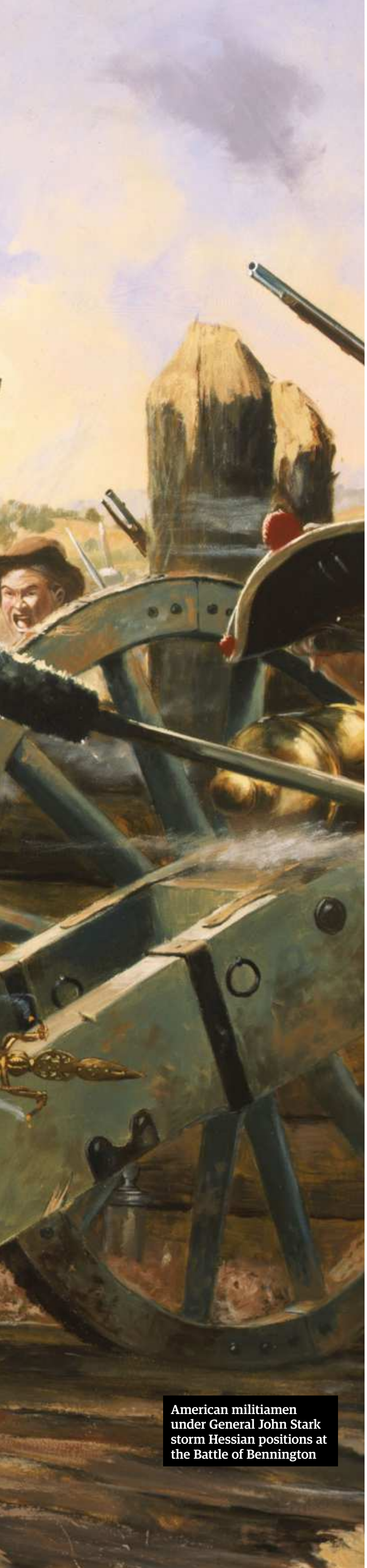
Rejected by King George III in the summer of 1775 following the battles of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, the Olive Branch Petition was a dead letter even before it reached the monarch. Penned chiefly by John Dickinson - at that time a delegate to the Second Continental Congress from Pennsylvania and later from Delaware - along with committee members Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay and John Rutledge, the petition followed the attempt to open negotiations with the British Crown that had been contained in the Petition to the King of 1774, and closed with the loyal phrase, "That your Majesty may enjoy long and prosperous reign, and that your descendants may govern your Dominions with honour to themselves and happiness to their subjects, is our sincere prayer."

The day after the Olive Branch Petition was approved by Congress, the Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms was crafted, sending a somewhat mixed message. Regardless, King George III had already charted a course towards war, branding the colonists as treasonous rebels. On 23 August, he had issued the Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition. His colonial secretary, Lord Dartmouth, informed envoys Richard Penn and Arthur Lee on 1 September 1775 that they would not receive a reply to the Olive Branch Petition.



After the Olive Branch Petition failed to open a dialogue between the colonists and the British Crown, the Revolutionary War gained momentum




American militiamen under General John Stark storm Hessian positions at the Battle of Bennington

June-Oct 1777

Turning point at Saratoga

The American victory in the Saratoga campaign in the autumn of 1777 convinces the French to enter the war on the side of the patriots

Patriot leader John Adams referred to 1777 as the "year of the hangman" because its written appearance resembled three gallows. Indeed, the Continental Army was hanging on during the harsh winter at Morristown, New Jersey, but the spark of resistance and revolution remained alive.

Inevitably, the spring brought a renewal of the British military offensive to eradicate the rebellion, and military planners generally believed that the prospects for success in New York were most favourable. A swift attack down the Hudson River Valley from Canada, if successful, might sever the New England colonies from the remainder and bring the war to a triumphant conclusion.

During the entire four-month campaign, Continental Army and militia casualties totalled only 90 killed and 240 wounded

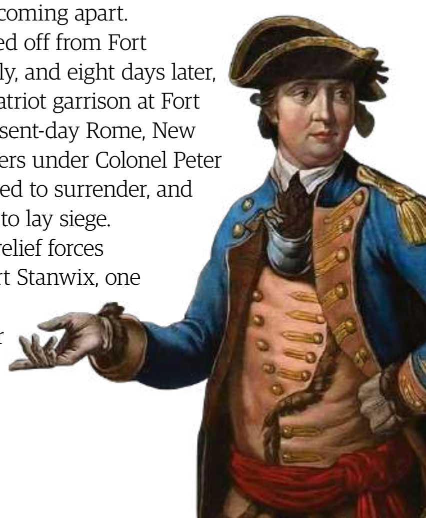
Major General John Burgoyne commanded a large force of 8,000 men in Canada. From near Montreal, he would move by boat down Lake Champlain and then march overland to the town of Albany, while an 800-man force under Colonel Barry St Leger would move southwest up the St Lawrence River to join Burgoyne there. The garrison at New York City was 16,000 strong, and General William Howe was to lead at least a portion of that army north along the Hudson to engage any American forces that might be in the area, expected to only advance towards Albany, which lay some 320 kilometres distant.

On 14 June 1777, Burgoyne began his offensive. Three weeks later, his command reached Fort Ticonderoga, occupied by the Americans for nearly two years. The 2,500-man garrison under General Arthur St Clair evacuated as the British began to place heavy artillery on high ground, and the fortress fell on 6 July. Burgoyne continued through briars and thickets to Fort Edward on the Hudson. With each step, his supply lines lengthened, and the harassment of bushwhacking colonial militiamen intensified. Four more gruelling weeks were spent on the march.

Hungry and footsore, the British columns were in need of food and other provisions, so Burgoyne ordered the Brunswick dragoons, a mercenary unit of 800 men, to forage the countryside in an area known as the New Hampshire Grants. Little opposition was expected, but the Germans ran into 1,500 rebels at Bennington, Vermont, under General John Stark. On 16 August, Stark attacked, shouting, "There they are! We'll beat them before night, or Molly Stark will be a widow!" Both enemy flanks gave way, and a bullet felled the German commander, Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Baum. The Americans pursued their fleeing foe, but became disorganised before 300 reinforcements entered the fray. When it was over, American casualties amounted to 30 dead and 40 wounded, while the Germans left 200 dead and 700 prisoners in their panicked wake.

Stunned by the defeat, Burgoyne soon found more reasons to be dismayed. The complicated British plan was coming apart.

St Leger stepped off from Fort Oswego on 25 July, and eight days later, confronted the patriot garrison at Fort Stanwix near present-day Rome, New York. The defenders under Colonel Peter Gansevoort refused to surrender, and St Leger decided to lay siege. Meanwhile, two relief forces converged on Fort Stanwix, one numbering 800 militiamen under Colonel Nicholas

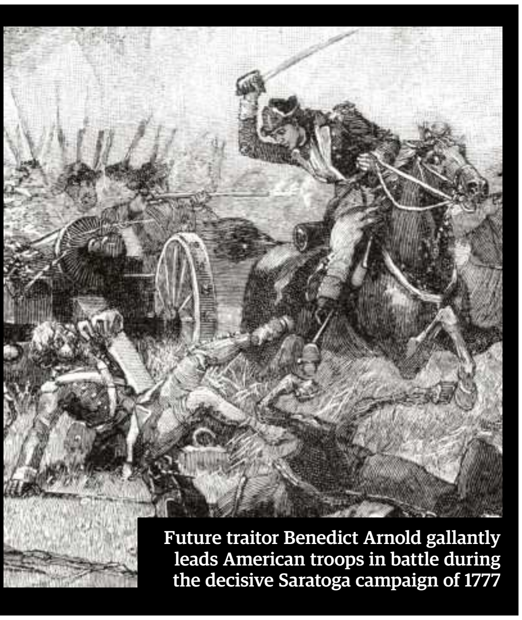

© Getty

The traitor Benedict Arnold

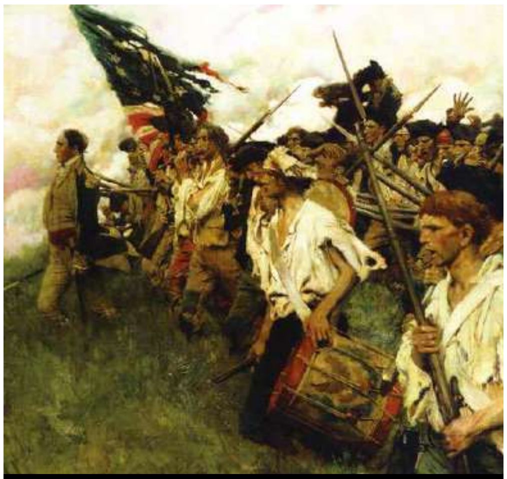
Had Benedict Arnold been killed at Saratoga, it would have been a hero's death. Perhaps no other individual had, to that point in the war, contributed so much to the revolutionary cause on the battlefield. Arnold had been a well-to-do merchant in Connecticut prior to the war and served as a captain of militia. He accompanied Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga in May 1775, and commanded one of two Continental Army contingents during an ill-fated invasion of Canada that autumn. At the Battle of Quebec on 31 December 1775, he was seriously wounded in the same leg that later caught a British ball at Saratoga.

Promoted to brigadier general, Arnold coordinated the American retreat from Canada in 1776 and executed a stalwart defence of Lake Champlain while commanding a small naval squadron around Valcour Island that October. Still, he was disgruntled by the slowness of his promotion to major general and quarrelled with his superior, General Horatio Gates, during the Saratoga campaign.

Perhaps it was ambition or jealousy that drove Arnold to begin a treasonous correspondence with British General Sir Henry Clinton. Arnold offered to surrender the American fortress at West Point for £20,000, but his deceit was uncovered with the arrest of the British spy John André on 23 September 1780. Arnold defected shortly after, receiving a brigadier general's commission in the British Army. He died in obscurity in London on 14 June 1801. His name has become synonymous with duplicity and treason.



Future traitor Benedict Arnold gallantly leads American troops in battle during the decisive Saratoga campaign of 1777



Howard Pyle's 1903 painting *The Nation Makers* depicts Lieutenant General William Maxwell's counterattack during the Battle of Brandywine

"The patriots reorganised amid heavy rain and held their own"

Herkimer and the other of 900 led by General Benedict Arnold. While Gansevoort dispatched a raiding party to hit St Leger's encampment, the British commander sent 400 loyalists and Native Americans to ambush Herkimer in a wooded ravine ten kilometres from Fort Stanwix.

The Battle of Oriskany began on the morning of 6 August as the Native Americans and loyalists attacked Herkimer. The issue was in doubt for a while, but the patriots reorganised amid heavy rain and held their own as casualties amounted to more than 400. Meanwhile, Gansevoort's raiders destroyed much of the British bivouac, convincing the remaining Native Americans to desert. When St Leger learned that Arnold was bearing down, he lifted the siege of Fort Stanwix and headed back towards Fort Oswego.

In New York City, Howe – who disliked Burgoyne intensely – was not required to follow the plan. Instead, he decided to advance against George Washington's army in Pennsylvania, striking at Philadelphia, the patriot capital. Although Howe authorised his subordinate, General Henry Clinton, to advance along the Hudson, Burgoyne could not count on substantial help from Howe, whose reasons for his actions are debated to this day. Clinton captured three American forts and broke through a chain barrier on the river, but time

Defining moment

Treaty of Dewitt's Corner

20 May 1777

Threatened by encroachment on their hunting grounds in the Carolinas, the Cherokee had gone to war against colonial settlers the previous July and were defeated in battle. The treaty strips the Cherokee of most of their lands, and a faction relocates westwards into Tennessee, siding with the British during the American Revolution.

Timeline

1777

- **British rebuffed at Ridgefield**
  After destroying American stores at Danbury, Connecticut, British forces are harassed by American militia under Benedict Arnold during their retirement to New York. The raid galvanises popular support for the patriot cause.
  27 April 1777

- **Burgoyne begins his Saratoga campaign**
  With 8,000 men under arms, General John Burgoyne sets off through the wilds of upstate New York toward Albany. The long march soon takes its toll on his combat effectiveness.
  14 June 1777

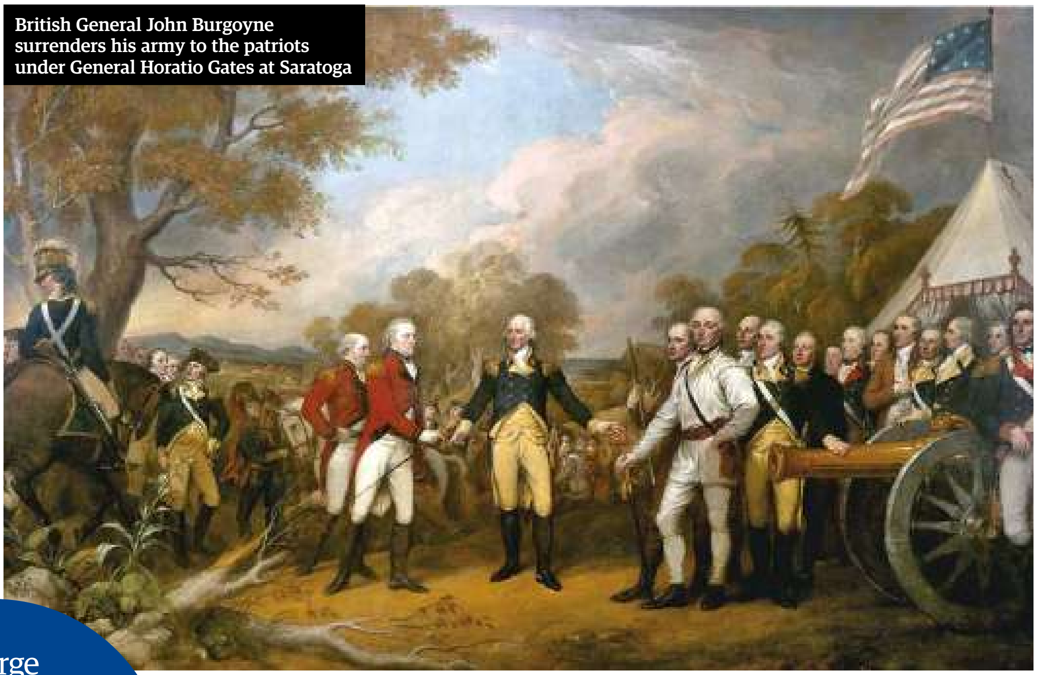
- **St Clair abandons Ticonderoga**
  The British under General John Burgoyne occupy Fort Ticonderoga after American General Arthur St Clair, faced with enemy heavy artillery occupying nearby high ground, decides to evacuate his 2,500-man garrison.
  5 July 1777

- **Stark stings at Bennington**
  General John Stark leads 1,500 colonial troops to victory against a force of German mercenaries half its size that General Burgoyne has sent into the countryside to forage for food and supplies.
  16 July 1777

- **Battle of Oriskany**
  At first a force of loyalists and Indians threaten to overwhelm colonials under Colonel Nicholas Herkimer, but the rebels rally during a driving rainstorm to stabilise the situation, forcing the enemy to retire.
  6 August 1777

- **Siege of Fort Stanwix abandoned**
  When news of the approach of a sizeable American force under Benedict Arnold reaches British Colonel Barry St Leger, he abandons the siege of Fort Stanwix and retraces his steps northward.
  22 August 1777

- **Burgoyne fails at Freeman's Farm**
  During the Saratoga campaign, Burgoyne sends three divisions against the Americans at Freeman's Farm, but a strong counterattack led by Benedict Arnold thwarts the effort while Daniel Morgan's sharpshooters decimate British officers.
  19 September 1777



British General John Burgoyne surrenders his army to the patriots under General Horatio Gates at Saratoga

slowly ebbed away. By October, Clinton was still more than 160 kilometres from Burgoyne.

As the climax of the Saratoga campaign began to take shape, General Horatio Gates, commander of the main American army in the north, occupied strong defensive positions at Bemis Heights. On the morning of 19 September, he allowed Burgoyne to launch an attack by three divisions at Freeman's Farm, although Arnold, fresh from his foray to Fort Stanwix, had begged Gates to allow him to deliver the first blow. In response to Burgoyne, Gates dispatched crack shots under General Daniel Morgan to pick off British officers, while Arnold launched a ferocious counterattack that sent the British reeling. When Arnold requested reinforcements to exploit his gains, Gates refused. Arnold ignored an order to halt and continued to attack. The timely arrival of 1,100 redcoat reinforcements saved the remaining British troops. Burgoyne lost 600 men at Freeman's Farm, a toll he could ill afford.

Burgoyne had completely lost control of the situation but still he believed that one strong blow against Gates could save the entire campaign. On 7 October, he ordered General Simon Fraser to advance 1,500 men against the rebels on Bemis Heights. Gates sent Morgan bowling into Fraser's right flank at the edge of a wheatfield, while other American forces struck the British left and the Germans in the centre.

Gates had sidelined Arnold for insubordination, but when the battle began, the headstrong subordinate rode towards the sound of the fighting. He exhorted a group of militiamen to follow him and tore straight through the enemy centre. Fraser was killed trying to stabilise a second defensive line, and Arnold swept on to capture two British earthen redoubts; however, he was seriously wounded in the leg in the process.

> George Washington's life was spared when British marksman Patrick Ferguson refused to fire at him

When the Battle of Bemis Heights was over, the British had suffered over 400 casualties, while the Americans suffered only 150. Burgoyne retired to the village of Saratoga and contemplated a fighting retreat towards the relative safety of Fort Edward.

In the end, however, he chose to surrender after losing 440 killed and 695 wounded in the abortive campaign. On 17 October 1777, a total of 6,222 British troops marched into captivity. The course of the American Revolutionary War had been permanently altered.

In far-off France, the news of Saratoga bolstered American diplomat Benjamin Franklin's effort to secure French support. A treaty of friendship was followed by a French declaration of war against Britain, and Spain subsequently joined the alliance. Britain was again involved in a wider conflict; both parliament and the public were stunned by the defeat at Saratoga.

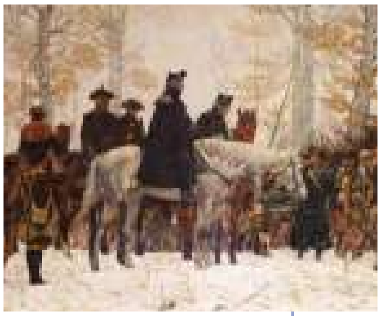
In Pennsylvania, Howe defeated Washington's army at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown and marched into Philadelphia. The victory, however, was somewhat hollow since an entire British army had been shattered in the north. Washington's ragged, famished army endured the cruel winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, while the British were warm and dry in Philadelphia despite the bruising defeat at Saratoga.

Defining moment

British victory at Brandywine

11 September 1777

Rather than supporting General John Burgoyne's offensive in New York, British General William Howe strikes at Washington's army in Pennsylvania, intent on capturing the colonial capital of Philadelphia. Howe executes a brilliant flanking manoeuvre along Brandywine Creek, causing the patriot right wing to break, while a simultaneous drive against the left flank is also successful. Troops under Nathanael Greene and Casimir Pulaski buy precious time for the Continental Army to escape, but Philadelphia lies open to the British. The defeat costs Washington's army 1,300 men.



Defining moment

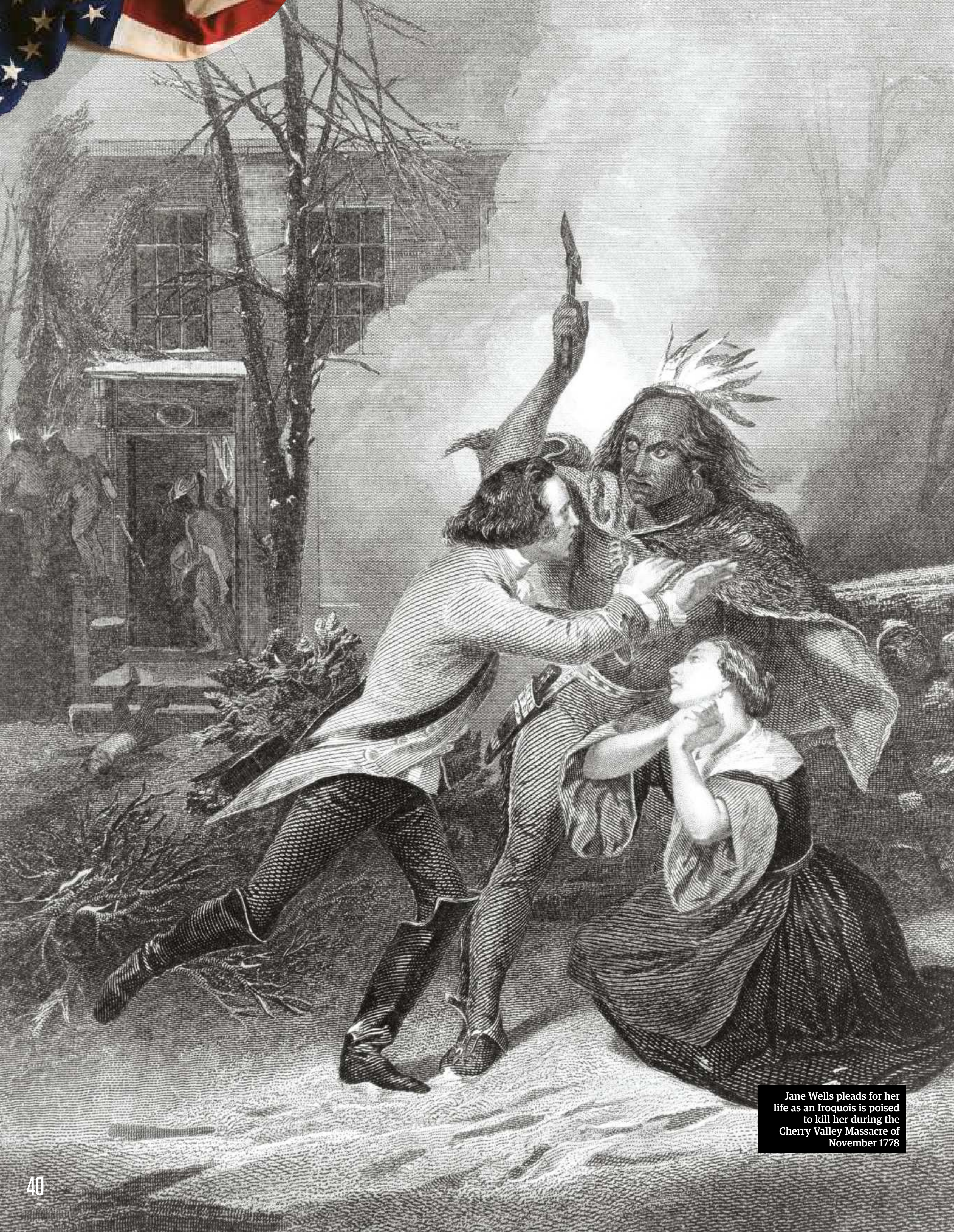
Washington arrives at Valley Forge

19 December 1777

After its defeat during the Philadelphia campaign, the Continental Army under Washington retires to winter quarters at Valley Forge, about 29 kilometres outside the capital, now occupied by William Howe's British troops. Washington's army nearly disintegrates as the terrible winter takes its toll. Starvation, desertion and sickness are rife, and many men sink into despair. Nevertheless, Washington succeeds in maintaining a cohesive force, while Prussian Baron von Steuben undertakes a training programme for those soldiers who are able, shaping them into a professional force capable of fighting the British the following spring.

1778

- **Howe occupies Philadelphia**
  After his victory at Brandywine, General William Howe leads his British army into Philadelphia, occupying the rebel capital until June 1778. The triumph provides little solace as the debacle at Saratoga unfolds.
  26 September 1777
- **Washington trumped at Germantown**
  General George Washington orders a four-pronged thrust against the British at Germantown outside Philadelphia, but the attack goes awry as the Americans become confused in dense fog and repeated assaults are repulsed.
  4 October 1777
- **Burgoyne battered at Bemis Heights**
  In the climactic battle of the Saratoga campaign, British General John Burgoyne is defeated at Bemis Heights, also known as the Second Battle of Freeman's Farm, retreating to the village of Saratoga.
  7 October 1777
- **Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga**
  Ending his disastrous offensive in New York, British General John Burgoyne surrenders over 6,000 troops to American forces under Horatio Gates. The patriot victory is a turning point of the Revolution.
  17 October 1777
- **A treaty with France**
  Impressed with the patriot victory at Saratoga, France concludes a treaty of friendship with American envoy Benjamin Franklin, going to war with Britain and sending troops, warships and supplies to aid the rebellion.
  6 February 1778



Jane Wells pleads for her life as an Iroquois is poised to kill her during the Cherry Valley Massacre of November 1778

The Native American revolutionary experience

The outbreak of the American Revolution inevitably brought the Native American tribes into the conflict and hastened their loss of lands and status

With the end of the French and Indian War, the British Crown published the Royal Proclamation of 1763, ensuring that the colonial encroachment on Native American lands would be halted at the Allegheny Mountains. All territory west of the peaks would remain in Indian possession.

The measure was intended to placate the Indians and came in the midst of a violent uprising by the Ottawa tribe under Chief Pontiac along with the Seneca and Delaware in the Great Lakes region. Enraged that the British had continued to build on their lands and irked that sufficient gifts had not been rendered to assure the good intentions of the Europeans, the Indians burned British forts and wrecked settlements, sparing only Detroit, Fort Pitt and Fort Niagara.

In the terms of the proclamation, colonists were further forbidden from purchasing land west of the mountain line or entering into any agreements with the Indians. Only licensed traders were allowed westward. Ostensibly, the measure was intended to protect the colonists from Indian attacks and conversely to protect Indian lands from an avalanche of land speculators and settlers.

From the beginning, an edict that would stem the westward tide of colonial settlement and land speculation in North America was wishful thinking, and the Native American position was steadily growing more precarious. With the ejection of the French from North America, they were no longer able to preserve their own interests while playing major European powers against one another as they vied for Indian cooperation. Since the mid-1750s, the crown had appointed commissioners in the Northern and Southern colonies to see to the administration of Indian issues, and the proclamation, although intended as a temporary measure, soon became more evidence to colonial leaders of London's overreach in North American affairs.

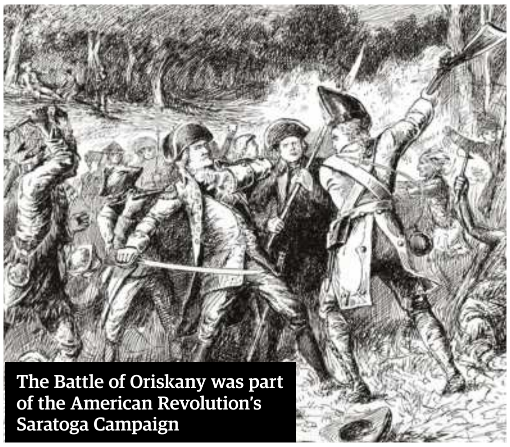
The British understood that as unrest fomented in the colonies the Indians might become valuable allies. Despite their earlier conduct, they assured them that once the rebellion was quelled their lands and their way of life would be protected.

> American militia massacred 96 Delaware Indians, who were Christians of the Moravian faith, at Gnadenhutten, Ohio

© Getty, Alamy

When war came, however, the great Indian nations were in a quandary. For those in the West, the British were obviously stronger militarily than the colonists, and the Americans seemed more of an immediate threat than any malevolent intentions of the far-off King George III. However, by the time of the revolution, many of the coastal tribes had lived among the Americans for 150 years. They had become involved in the colonial economy, intermarried, and many had otherwise assimilated in the new way of life.

The real beginning of trouble for the Native Americans occurred in 1774 with Lord Dunmore's War. Asserting territorial claims to the west and northwest in the colony's charter, Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, crossed the Alleghenies as far as Western Pennsylvania, sparking a war with the Shawnee and Delaware, while the six nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Tuscarora, Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Mohawk, and Oneida, watched anxiously. Negotiations with the British superintendents of Indian Affairs, Sir William Johnson and Guy Johnson, and the assistance of Joseph Brant, a Mohawk leader educated in Connecticut at Eleazar Wheelock's Indian School, persuaded the Iroquois to remain at peace and brought the Virginians and Shawnee to the negotiating table. Brant's sister, Molly, was the wife of William Johnson.



The Battle of Oriskany was part of the American Revolution's Saratoga Campaign

In the same year, Parliament passed the Quebec Act, which extended the boundaries of the Proclamation of 1763, giving jurisdiction over all lands from the Ohio to the Mississippi River to the Quebec government and widening the boundaries of Quebec from Hudson Bay in the north to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi in the west and south. The American colonists again saw the action as detrimental to their interests, and the measure contributed significantly to the outbreak of the revolution and subsequent invasion of Quebec by colonial troops in 1775.

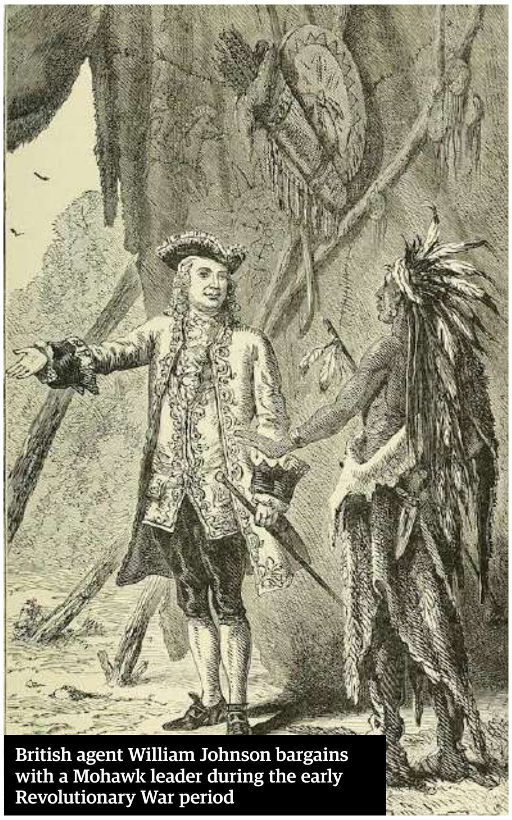
In 1794, General Anthony Wayne defeated the Indians of the northwest region at the Battle of Fallen Timbers

When war came, initially neither side actively courted the support of armed Native Americans. British agent Guy Johnson explained the Boston Tea Party to the Iroquois saying, "This dispute was solely occasioned by some people, who not withstanding a law of the King and his wise Men, would not let some Tea land, but destroyed it, on which he was angry, and sent some troops with the General (Thomas Gage), whom you have long known, to see the Laws executed and bring the people to their senses, and as he is proceeding with great wisdom, to shew [sic] them their great mistake, I expect it will soon be over."

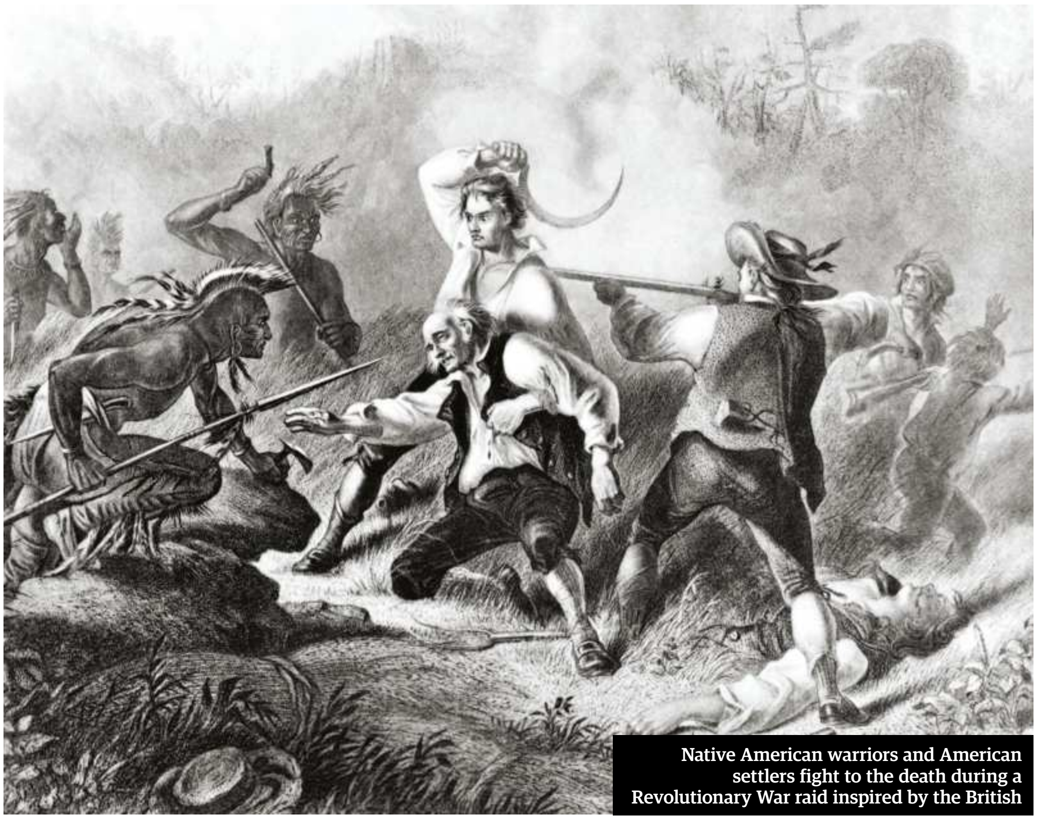
In the summer of 1775, the Second Continental Congress issued a statement for its commissioners to the Native Americans to announce. "This is a family quarrel between us and Old England. We do not wish you to take up the hatchet against the king's troops. We desire you to remain at home, and not join either side, but keep the hatchet buried deep."

More than a year passed before either side attempted to entice the Indians to take up arms. Further, there is little evidence that the British had previously sought to stir up anti-colonial sentiment or encouraged the Indians to raid colonial settlements. Nevertheless, among the grievances against the Crown that Thomas Jefferson listed in the Declaration of Independence, approved by the Continental Congress, was an indictment of King George III for doing just that.

"He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions," wrote Jefferson. With this statement, the colonists potentially alienated every Native American. Still, the majority of the Indians attempted to remain neutral during the revolution,



British agent William Johnson bargains with a Mohawk leader during the early Revolutionary War period



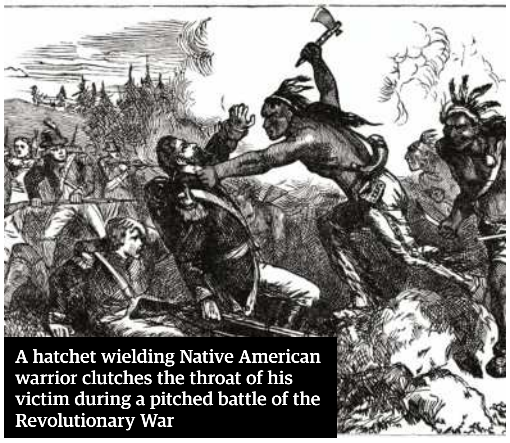
Native American warriors and American settlers fight to the death during a Revolutionary War raid inspired by the British and when they did eventually choose sides they were fighting as much for their own continuing independence as for any notion of support for George III or a new colonial national identity. It was apparent that their lands were at stake and that their very way of life was threatened. Ultimately, both the British and the colonists sought the support of Native Americans.

The revolution fractured the Iroquois Confederacy as Guy Johnson and Joseph Brant returned from a visit to London in the summer of 1776. Both worked to convince the nations of the Confederacy to join the British in the fighting, and to stoke Native American enmity toward the colonists, the British invited them to "feast on a Bostonian and drink his Blood." The split came during the Great Congress at Irondequoit a year later. The British lavished gifts of rum, foodstuffs and trinkets on the delegates, and Brant was quite persuasive. Four of the nations, the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga and Mohawk, did fight for the British; however, most of the Oneida and Tuscarora did not. The rupture was confirmed in blood at the Battle of Oriskany during the Saratoga campaign on 6 August 1777, as the British and their Seneca allies fought Americans allied with Oneida and Tuscarora warriors. The Seneca lost 17 killed and 16 wounded; overall 33 Native Americans died and 29 were wounded. Days later the former 'brothers' clashed again at the Battle of Freeman's Farm.

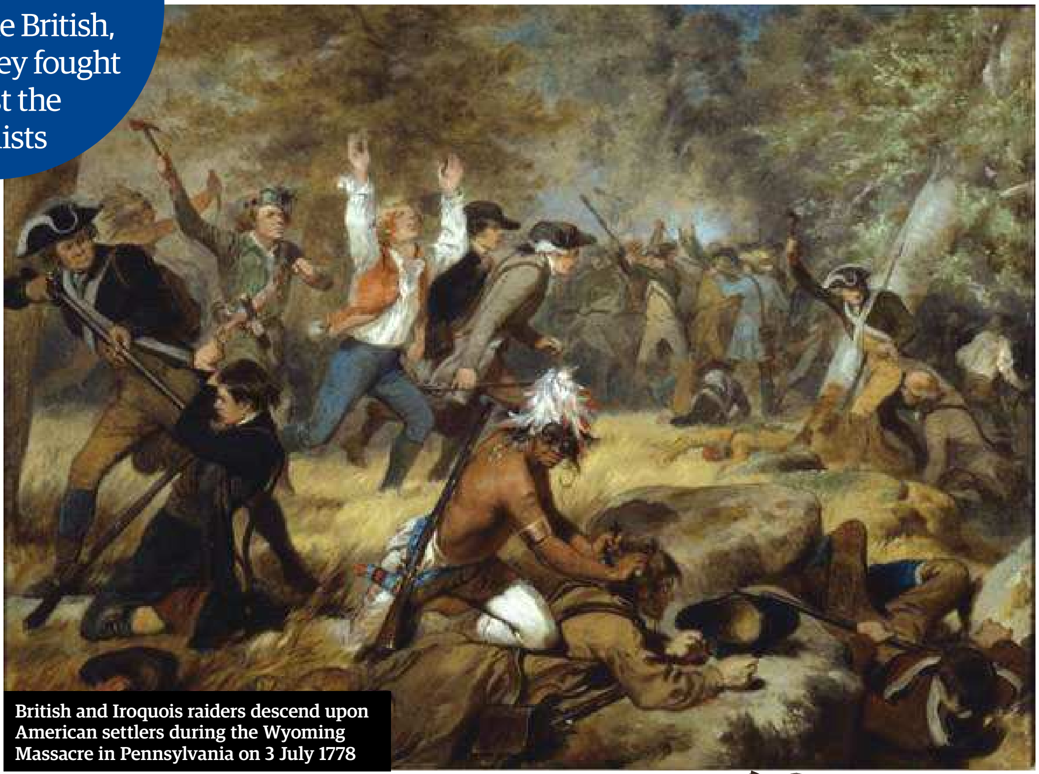
The main British force in the Saratoga campaign was commanded by General John Burgoyne, and Indians under his charge murdered a young white female, further enraging rebel sentiment against them. The Iroquois mounted British-sponsored raids on colonial settlements, and in response General John Sullivan led an expedition that burned Iroquois towns to the ground and destroyed provisions. When the war was over, many of the Indians who had sided with the British migrated north of the Canadian border, seeking the protection of their benefactors rather than enduring the harshness of a vengeful American government.

The Cherokee defeat caused the Creek Nation, to hesitate to support the British, but later they fought against the colonists

"It was apparent that their lands were at stake"



A hatchet wielding Native American warrior clutches the throat of his victim during a pitched battle of the Revolutionary War



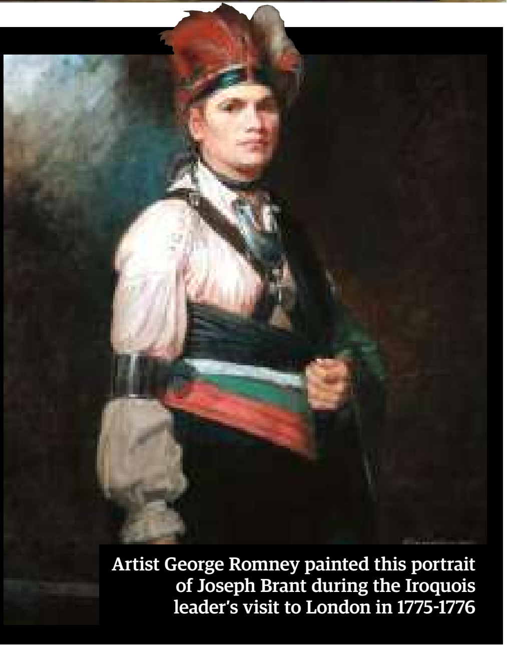
British and Iroquois raiders descend upon American settlers during the Wyoming Massacre in Pennsylvania on 3 July 1778

Mohawk Joseph Brant

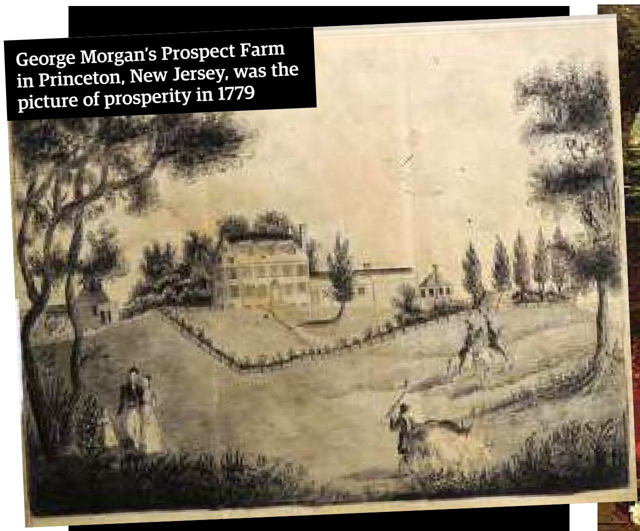
Born Thayendanegea, Mohawk leader Joseph Brant was already prominent among the Iroquois Confederacy and the Europeans when he travelled to Britain in 1775. He had grown up surrounded by Native American and European cultures and was educated in a school that was the forerunner of Dartmouth College. During the French and Indian War, he fought with the British. His family became allied with that of British commissioner William Johnson, who married Brant's sister, Molly.

On 11 November 1775, Brant set out for London with Guy Johnson, successor to his uncle William. He hoped to address Iroquois' concerns over American encroachment on Indian lands, particularly since Brant's people had fought the French in the recent war. He was received with fanfare and presented to King George III wearing traditional Mohawk garb. He became a Mason, receiving his apron from the king, along with pledges of land in Quebec in exchange for support in suppressing the rebellion. Artist George Romney painted Brant's portrait, and he returned to America convinced that the future of the Iroquois lay with the British.

On the battlefield, Brant was said to have spared the life of Captain John Wood during an attack on the colonial settlement at Minisink, New York. Wood inadvertently flashed the sign of the Master Mason as he was about to be killed, and Brant stepped in. Wood, who was not a Mason at the time, later applied for membership. Brant was wounded in action, settled in Ontario after the war, and died at the age of 64 in 1807.



Artist George Romney painted this portrait of Joseph Brant during the Iroquois leader's visit to London in 1775-1776



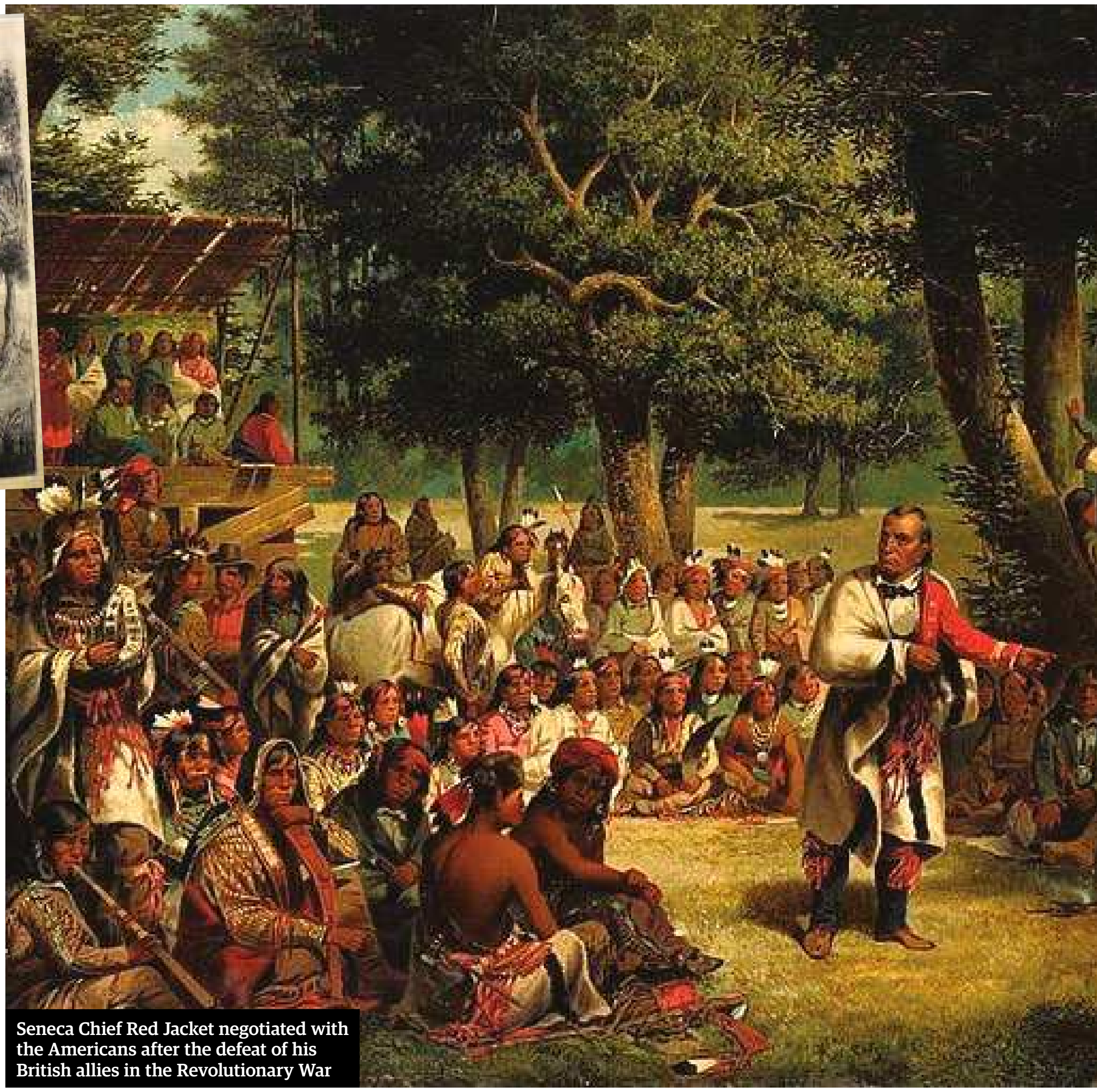
George Morgan's Prospect Farm in Princeton, New Jersey, was the picture of prosperity in 1779

The murder of White Eyes

An early advocate for his people, the Delaware, or Lenape, tribe, Chief White Eyes attempted unsuccessfully to mediate between the Shawnee and the government of Virginia prior to Lord Dunmore's War. Afterward, he negotiated to secure Delaware territory in the Ohio Country. When Dunmore was eventually ejected from Virginia, White Eyes worked to conclude an alliance with the Americans in their war for independence, becoming closely associated with government Indian agent George Morgan.

In 1776, White Eyes addressed the Continental Congress, and in 1778 a treaty between the Delaware and the fledgling United States seemed to assure that the Delaware would have a future if the colonists won their independence. The treaty provided that the Delaware would occupy an actual 'state' and receive representation in Congress, while the Delaware were to provide scouts for the rebels and even serve in the militia or Continental Army. Two years later, White Eyes joined an expedition led by General Lachlan McIntosh against the British at Detroit. During the expedition, American officials reported, White Eyes contracted smallpox and died.

Sometime afterward, Morgan wrote to Congress of a cover-up, asserting that White Eyes had actually been "treacherously put to death" by militiamen. According to later documentation, an American officer had killed him on 5 November 1778. Efforts to maintain the alliance with the Delaware were ultimately fruitless, and they joined other tribes on the British side. Morgan raised White Eyes' son, George Morgan White Eyes, and the Continental Congress paid for his education at the College of New Jersey, which became Princeton University.



Seneca Chief Red Jacket negotiated with the Americans after the defeat of his British allies in the Revolutionary War

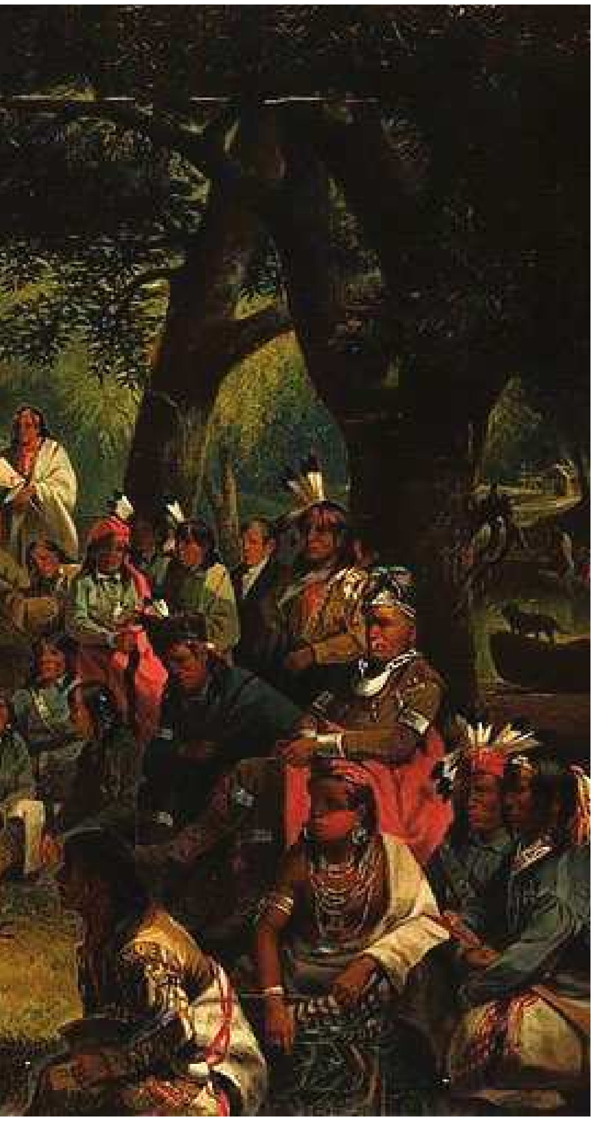
> "For the Native Americans, the consequences of the Revolutionary War were devastating"

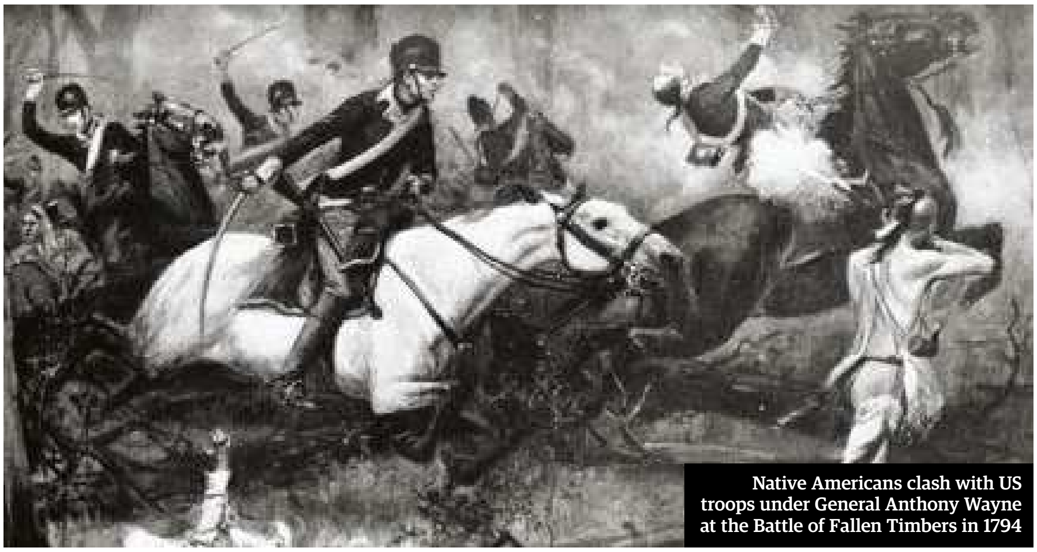
The memory of the bitter wartime experience was etched in the minds of the Iroquois for generations. When Chief Cornplanter of the Seneca visited President George Washington in 1790, he remarked, "When your army entered the country of the six nations, we called you Town Destroyer; and to this day when the name is heard our women look behind them and turn pale, and our children cling close to the necks of their mothers."

In the South, the Cherokee were inclined to support the British. The terms of the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals had transferred to the land speculators of the Transylvania Company title to large tracts in present-day Kentucky and Tennessee in 1775, but disaffected Cherokee refused to accede to the treaty and vowed that attempts to settle the country would lead to war.

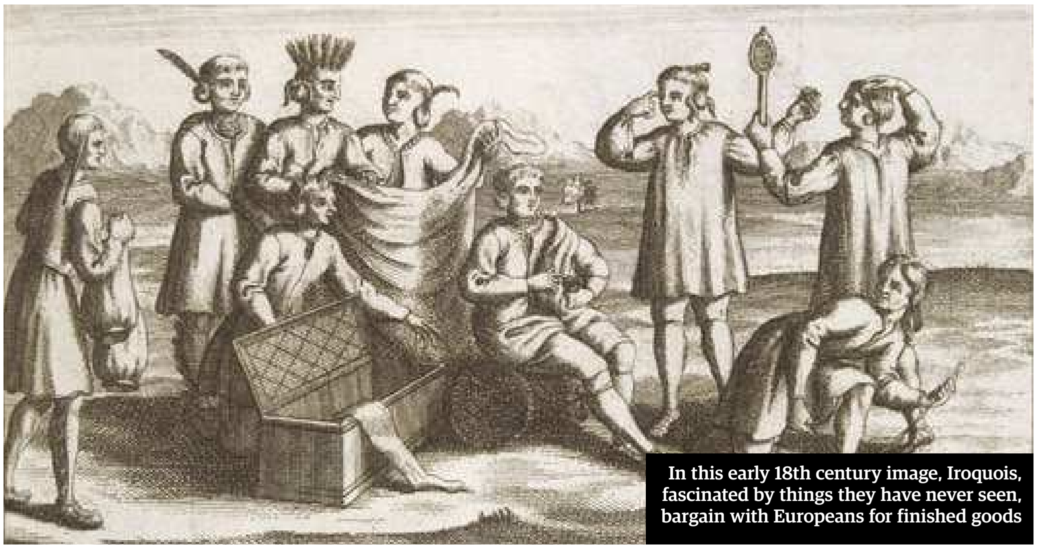
The outbreak of the revolution inspired an uprising among the Cherokee, who were influenced by a delegation of Native Americans from the North in 1776, urging them to take up arms against the rebels. The Cherokee raided settlements and burned homes without the direct support of the British Army. The Americans sent punitive expeditions against Cherokee towns, retaliating and forcing the Indians to accept peace terms. Dragging Canoe and the Chickamauga, however, refused to yield. Moving westward and erecting new towns along the Tennessee River, the Chickamauga continued to fight – well beyond the end of the revolution. Such resistance was the beginning of the end for the Cherokee. Their towns were devastated and in the decades to come the majority of them were rounded up and force-marched hundreds of miles to the west along a route of starvation and disease called the 'Trail of Tears'.

In stark contrast to the Cherokee experience, the Stockbridge tribe of Massachusetts embraced





Native Americans clash with US troops under General Anthony Wayne at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794



In this early 18th century image, Iroquois, fascinated by things they have never seen, bargain with Europeans for finished goods

the American cause. The Stockbridge were a concentration of the Mohican tribe, traditional enemies of the Mohawk, who had originally settled in the Hudson Valley of New York. Many Mohican later relocated to the southeast near the town of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and were converted to Christianity. A full company of Stockbridge volunteers was raised to serve with the Continental Army, acting as infantrymen and scouts. They were commended by General Washington for their contribution and were present during the siege of Boston, the Saratoga campaign, and the Battle of Monmouth.

The vast interior of North America, including the Ohio River Valley and the lands east of the Mississippi, was home to the Shawnee, Delaware, and other tribes. They had migrated there from the East as settlers had continued to move onto their ancestral lands and established trading partnerships while raising crops and hunting the plentiful game. The rivalry between the Americans and the British, principally Henry Hamilton, the lieutenant governor of Quebec and ranking representative of the Crown at Detroit, and George Morgan, a land speculator and merchant appointed American agent for Indian Affairs involved the Native Americans.

Chief Cornstalk of the Shawnee had fought against Lord Dunmore in 1774, but his later perspective was one of neutrality. Still, his past became his undoing after Virginia militiamen seized him under a flag of truce and murdered him in 1777. Cornstalk's own sister, Nonhelema, worked with the Americans, fighting against colonial expeditions, raiding frontier settlements and defending against raids. Likewise, the Delaware hesitated to make war on the Americans.

The Southern Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes fought with the British during the revolution and sought a negotiated peace

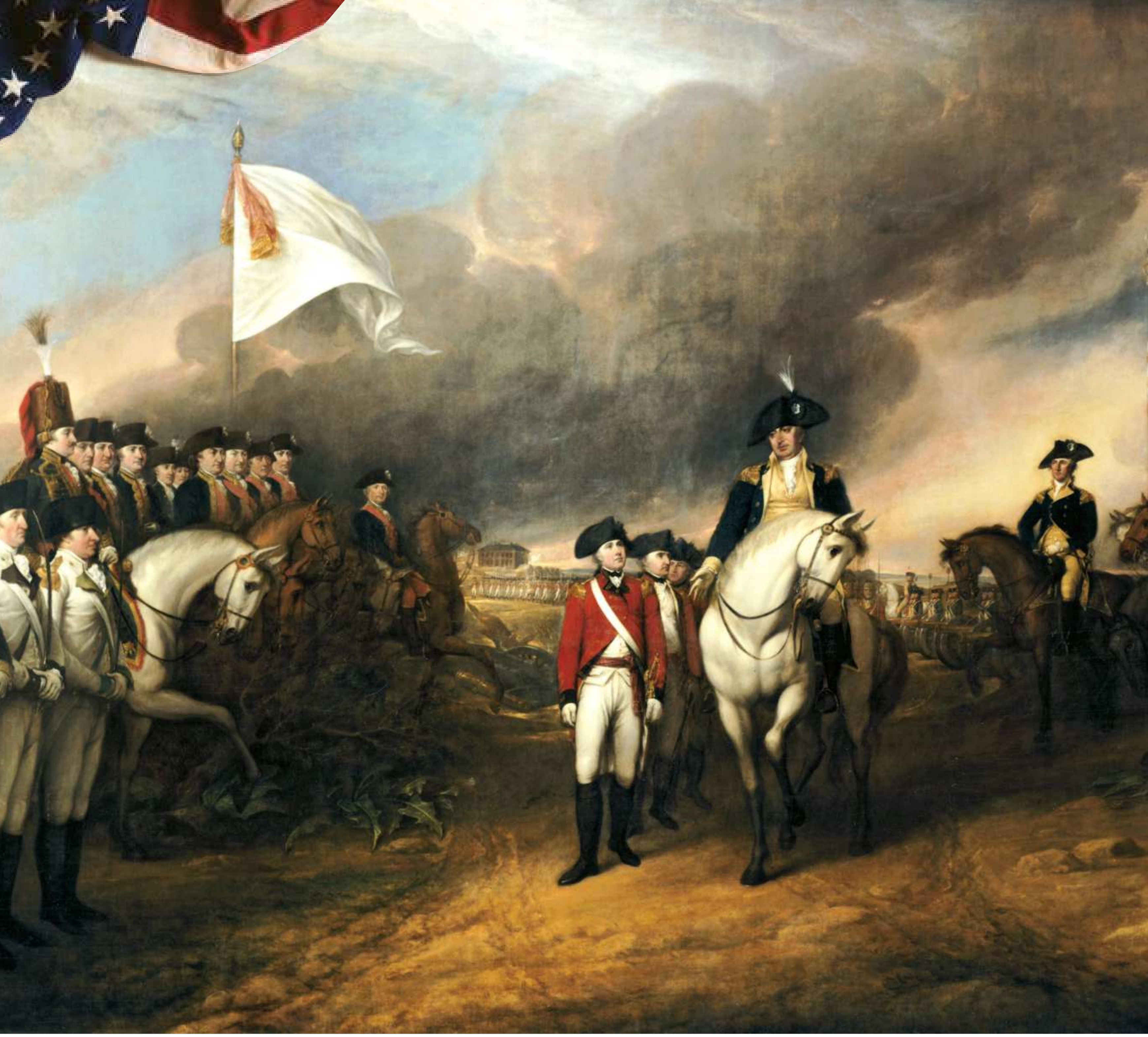
Tragically, the Delaware Chief White Eyes was murdered, and his people joined the British as well. White Eyes had previously negotiated the Treaty of Fort Pitt with the Second Continental Congress, but its fruits were wasted with his senseless killing.

After the revolution, the Delaware and Shawnee moved westward, away from the growing threat of American settlement in the Ohio Country. Some of them made their homes in present-day Missouri, a territory that was at least temporarily claimed by Spain, while a large concentration of the Native American population in the interior of the continent was located in the northwest of the region.

When France, the United States and Great Britain undertook peace talks in Paris in 1782, the interests of the Native Americans were put aside. Daniel Claus, the British agent for the Iroquois Confederacy, was shocked that his country's lead negotiator was at best indifferent to their plight, while Lord Walsingham, condemned the position stating, "Our treaties with them were solemn and ought to have been binding on our honour."

Conversely, while some American leaders were genuinely concerned with the treatment of the Indians, others asserted that the Native Americans were conquered peoples who had sided with their enemy during the Revolutionary War and should, therefore, be treated as such.

For the Native Americans, the consequences of the Revolutionary War were devastating.



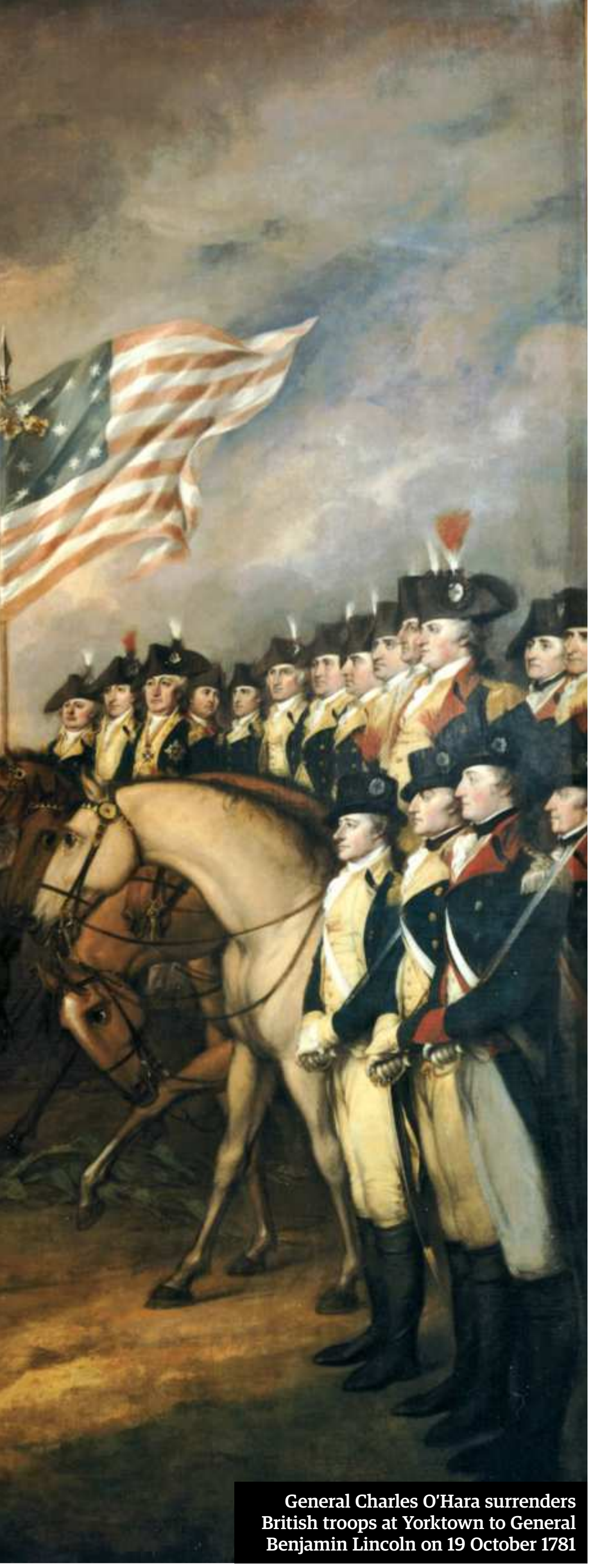
1778-1783

Decision at Yorktown

When the focus of the Revolution shifted south, the decisive battle came in the autumn of 1781

By the time the military campaigning season of 1778 began, British leaders sensed that their troops and constituents were growing fatigued with the protracted American war for independence. The failure of the previous year's effort to subdue the rebels and the shocking defeat at Saratoga prompted General William Howe to resign his post as commander-in-chief of British forces in North America.

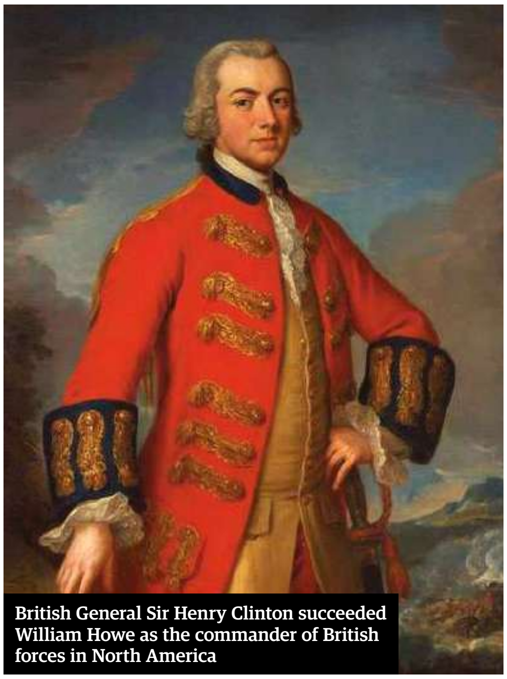
On 4 February 1778, Howe was succeeded by General Sir Henry Clinton, and with this change a re-evaluation of British strategy occurred. Clinton was ordered to abandon Philadelphia and return to New York City to protect the vital port. When General George Washington realised what was happening, he sent the Continental Army against Clinton's rear guard at Monmouth, New Jersey, on



General Charles O'Hara surrenders British troops at Yorktown to General Benjamin Lincoln on 19 October 1781

28 June. Washington's inept subordinate, General Charles Lee, nearly succeeded in losing the army, but Washington managed to rally the troops. The Battle of Monmouth ended in a draw, and a stalemate developed.

After three years of bloody fighting in the mid-Atlantic colonies and the North, the British had little to show for their effort except lengthening casualty rolls and an exploding national debt. Perhaps there was opportunity, though, to win a decisive victory in the South, where loyalist, or Tory, sympathies were believed strong; organised rebel military strength was apparently lacking; and moderate weather allowed for a longer campaigning season.



British General Sir Henry Clinton succeeded William Howe as the commander of British forces in North America

The first offensive moves in the South involved the seizure of major ports: Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina – at that time the fourth-largest port city in the North American colonies, with a population of more than 11,000. On 23 December, an army of 3,100 men commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell landed near Savannah. Six days later, the British decisively defeated the Continental Army and local militia units holding the city and secured the port. An American attempt to retake Savannah the following September was brushed aside.

Meanwhile, in December 1779, Clinton boarded ship in New York with his second-in-command, Lord Charles Cornwallis, and sailed with an 8,500-man army to the vicinity of Charleston. By 12 February 1780, Clinton's force had come ashore at Simmons Island, about 48 kilometres south of the city. By 1 April, he had laid siege, bottling up nearly 4,000 American and French troops under General Benjamin Lincoln, who surrendered on 12 May 1780. The scene of the capitulation was humiliating.

With South Carolina and Georgia firmly in British control, Clinton sailed back to New York, leaving Cornwallis to conduct a campaign into North Carolina and Virginia that would hopefully be war-winning. The follow-up thrust started with great promise, as the British handily defeated the Continental Army under General Horatio Gates at Camden, South Carolina, in August, inflicting 900 killed or wounded and taking 1,000 prisoners – nearly half the American force engaged. Colonial resistance stirred as guerrilla forces harassed British columns and militiamen, and a few Continental soldiers routed Tories and British regulars at the Battle of King's Mountain on the border between the Carolinas in October. On 17 January 1781, the harried rebel army bit back. General Daniel Morgan, a superb tactician, executed a near flawless battle plan at Cowpens, South Carolina, thoroughly defeating more than 1,100 British troops under Colonel Banastre Tarleton. The British were nearly wiped out, and Tarleton was among fewer than 200 who escaped.

Cornwallis was livid and struck out in pursuit of Morgan. Meanwhile, Washington had replaced Gates with General Nathanael Greene, who consolidated his forces and lured Cornwallis into a lengthy chase across North Carolina while falling back to southern Virginia. Greene remained just out of reach, crossing rain-swollen rivers and swamps, gathering strength as militia joined him, and all the while sapping British strength as their distance to supply bases lengthened. Then, in mid-March, Greene turned on his pursuer at Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina. As the two lines of infantry battled close to one another, Cornwallis unleashed his artillery on the tangle of troops, aware that he would inevitably kill or wound some of his own men. The British scored a tactical victory, but at a staggering cost. More than a quarter of Cornwallis's 2,100-man force became casualties.

Cornwallis withdrew to the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, to resupply and accept reinforcements that swelled his ranks to 7,000. Turning towards Virginia, he was dismayed that the tide of Tory support he expected had failed to materialise. Once again, supply shortages became a factor – along with stiffening resistance from Continental Army troops under General Anthony Wayne and the Marquis de Lafayette. Cornwallis decided to march again towards the sea, this time to the village of Yorktown, in the tidewater country of Virginia, situated along the York River just upstream from the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, capes Charles and Henry, and the Atlantic. From there, he could be resupplied and, if necessary, he believed, be reinforced or evacuated by ship.

At the same time, General George Washington and French Comte de Rochambeau were preparing an offensive against Clinton in New York. They received word of Cornwallis's movement, and immediately a new plan was devised. The

When Washington intervened at the Battle of Monmouth, he sacked General Charles Lee in the midst of the fighting

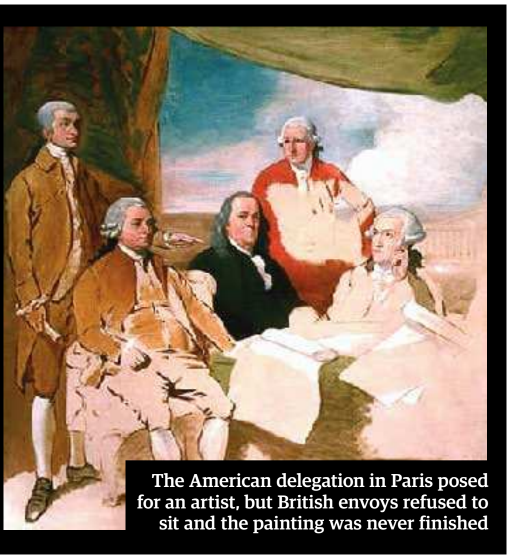
"Greene remained just out of reach, crossing rain-swollen rivers and swamps, gathering strength as militia joined him"

The Treaty of Paris

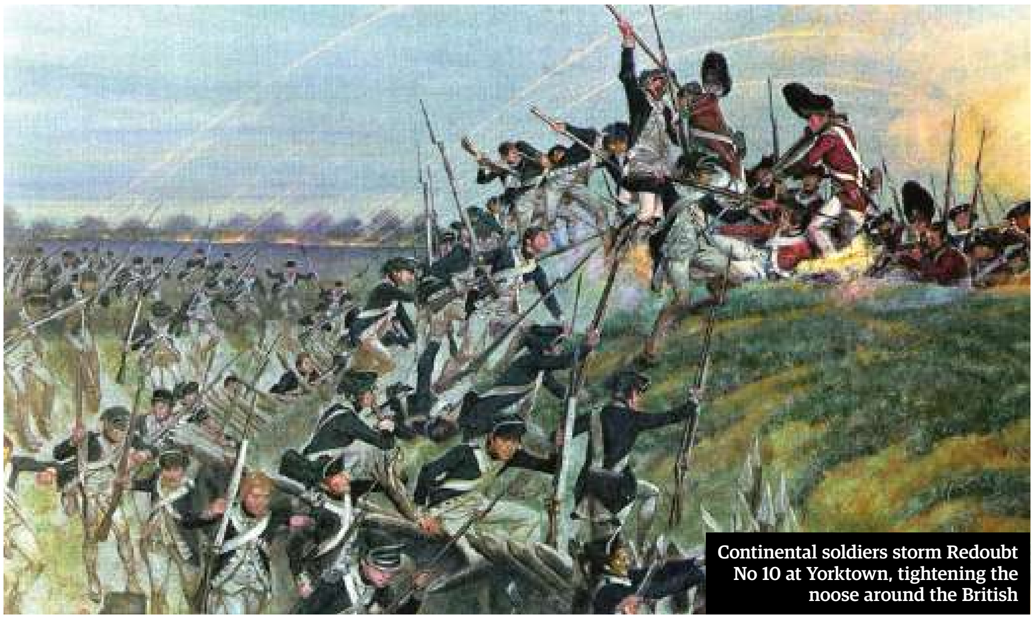
In April 1782, six months after the Franco-American military victory at Yorktown, peace talks began in Paris. Although the French expected the principal American emissaries - John Jay, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin - to conform with their conduct of the proceedings, the Americans were already charting their own peacetime course.

The negotiations did not conclude until early September 1783, and the colonial representatives secured substantial concessions from the new British government that had come to power after Yorktown. Foremost, the British recognised American independence. They also confirmed the rights of American fishermen to access the rich Grand Banks and other areas off the coast of Newfoundland and the Canadian Maritime Provinces. Further, the British ceded claims to territory from the Allegheny Mountains in the east to the Mississippi River in the west, doubling the size of the fledgling United States.

In return, the Americans pledged to protect those loyalists who remained in the former colonies and restore their property lost during the eight-year Revolutionary War. The representatives also agreed to permit those creditors on both sides who were owed outstanding debts to collect as they were able. Jay, Adams and Franklin signed for the United States, while peace commissioner Richard Oswald signed for Britain. The Continental Congress ratified the treaty on 14 January 1784.



The American delegation in Paris posed for an artist, but British envoys refused to sit and the painting was never finished



Continental soldiers storm Redoubt No 10 at Yorktown, tightening the noose around the British

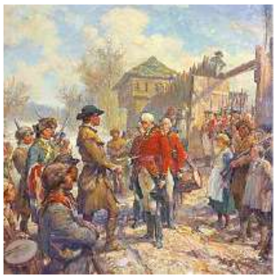
combined Franco-American army would march to Yorktown, where the British might be trapped from the landward side. Cooperatively, a French naval squadron under Admiral François Joseph Paul de Grasse would blockade the Chesapeake, preventing British relief from the sea.

The French warships reached the Chesapeake in late August, three days ahead of a British fleet under Admiral Thomas Graves. On 5 September 1781, the French prevailed in the naval Battle of the Capes, forcing Graves to retire and setting the stage for the landward siege.

Washington and Rochambeau arrived in the vicinity of Yorktown in late September with nearly 19,000 Continental and French troops and militia - more than twice the size of Cornwallis's force, which had grown to nearly 9,000 British soldiers and Hessian mercenaries. The French and Americans occupied trenches formerly held by the British and extended them in a semicircle called the first parallel. Washington himself lit the fuse as

Timeline

Battle of Monmouth
George Washington displays personal courage, rallying his troops at Monmouth, New Jersey, to fend off a potential rout. A stalemate ensues after the battle as both sides retire.
28 June 1778



Defining moment

Clark captures Kaskaskia

4 July 1778

During his Illinois campaign, George Rogers Clark leads Virginia militia westwards, seizing Kaskaskia, a French frontier town until the territory was ceded to Britain following the French and Indian War. In February 1779, Clark seizes the British settlement at Vincennes, in present-day Indiana. The movements provoke a British response, and Henry Hamilton leads an expedition that reoccupies Vincennes. However, Clark returns to take Vincennes once again, capturing Hamilton at Fort Sackville in the process.

1778

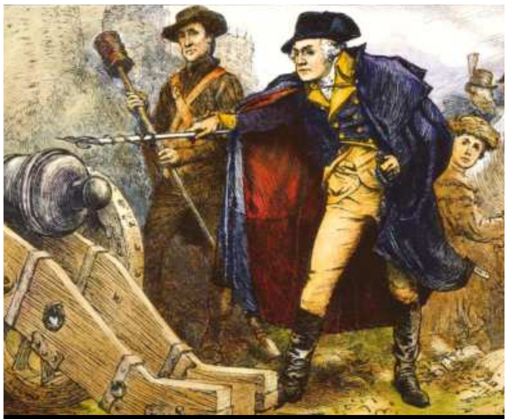
Clinton succeeds Howe
Following the defeat at Saratoga, William Howe is replaced as commander-in-chief of British forces in North America by General Sir Henry Clinton, previously reluctant to continue his own military career.
4 February 1778

The British abandon Philadelphia
After their successful military campaign to capture the colonial capital of Philadelphia, British troops are ordered to abandon the city and return to New York as a defensive measure.
28 June 1778

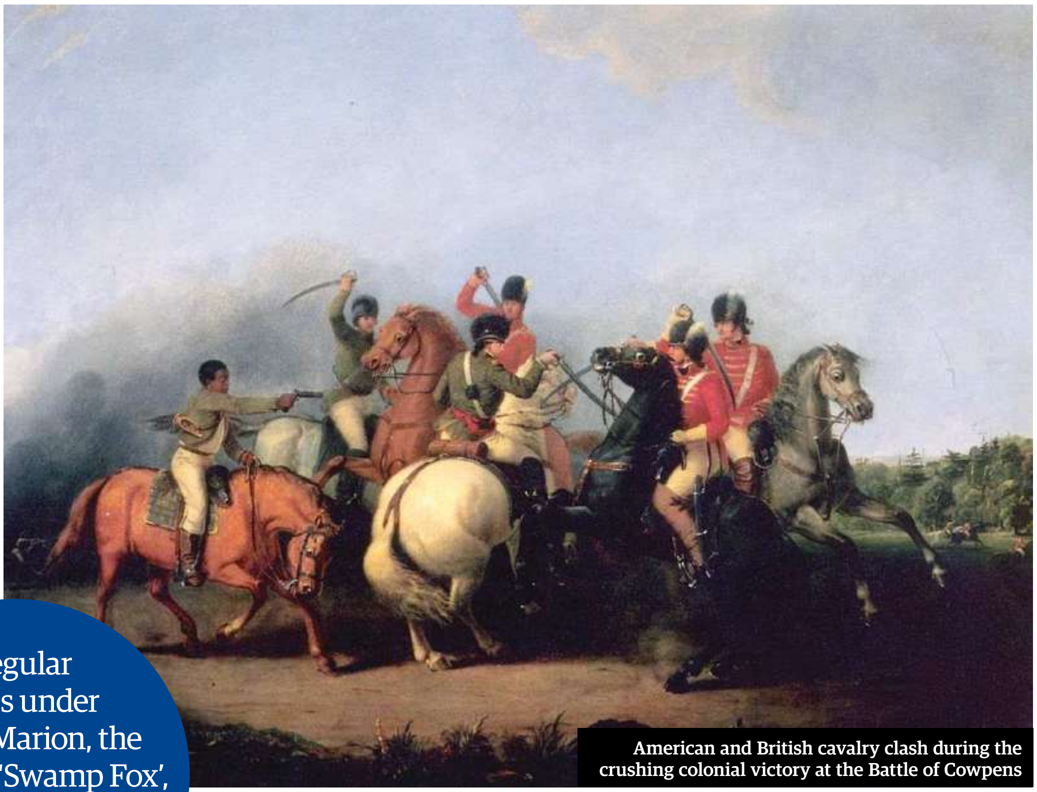
British occupy Savannah
After easily defeating the Continental troops and militia in the area, British soldiers take possession of Savannah on the Georgia coast. They hold the city until ordered to evacuate in 1782.
29 December 1778

Spain declares war
Following the lead of France, Spain declares war on Great Britain, but King Charles III recoils from a treaty with the rebellious colonies, fearing that such an agreement would be potentially dangerous.
21 June 1779

Benjamin Lincoln surrenders Charleston
Following a brief siege, British troops capture the port city of Charleston, South Carolina, as 4,000 American and French soldiers surrender in a humiliating defeat.
12 May 1780



George Washington fires the first cannon as the siege of Yorktown begins. It ended in an American victory



American and British cavalry clash during the crushing colonial victory at the Battle of Cowpens

the first cannon shot was fired at the British. The bombardment grew to such intensity at times that Cornwallis was obliged to move his headquarters to the safety of a cave at the water's edge.

On the night of 14 October, French and American troops stormed Redoubts 9 and 10 - two key positions in the British defences - and the establishment of the second siege parallel allowed Washington to shell the town from three sides. Early on 17 October, a British officer and drummer boy appeared atop an earthen rampart to request a parlay. Surrender terms were concluded, and on 19 October 1781, the British surrendered 7,500 men while their fife and drum contingent played *The World Turn'd Upside Down* - a popular children's tune of the day that seemed appropriate for the moment.

Cornwallis feigned illness and did not attend the ceremonies, sending his aide, General Charles O'Hara, instead. O'Hara tried to offer Cornwallis's sword to Rochambeau, who refused, gesturing towards Washington. In turn, Washington, remembering the slight at Charleston, instructed O'Hara to hand the sword over to Benjamin Lincoln.

Irregular troops under Francis Marion, the legendary 'Swamp Fox', harassed the British in South Carolina continually

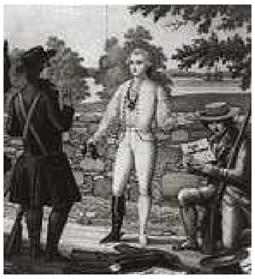
Yorktown was the decisive battle of the American Revolution, but the war did not formally end for another two years. British forces did not evacuate Savannah and Charleston until ordered to do so in July and December 1782, respectively. The Treaty of Paris, signed 3 September 1783, ended the conflict, and the last British soldiers left on 25 November.

"The bombardment grew to such intensity at times that Cornwallis moved his headquarters to the safety of a cave"

Defining moment

American naval hero 23 Sept 1779

Scottish-born American naval Captain John Paul Jones, sailing aboard the elderly, leaking frigate *Bonhomme Richard*, refuses to surrender to the British frigate *Serapis* during the close-quarter Battle of Flamborough Head off the coast of Yorkshire on 23 September. Jones responds to an inquiry with the famous phrase, "I have not yet begun to fight!" As the battle continues, Jones manoeuvres his ship alongside *Serapis* and orders his crew to board the enemy vessel. Subsequently, the badly damaged *Bonhomme Richard* sinks; however, Jones is the victor and his stirring cry becomes a legendary slogan of the United States Navy.



Defining moment

Spy John André arrested 1780

British spy John André is arrested on 23 September in New York, by militiamen who become suspicious of his intentions. Two days earlier, André had met with American General Benedict Arnold, concluding a treasonous bargain. When André is searched, papers implicating Arnold in a plan to cooperate with the British are discovered in his stocking. The 30-year-old André is tried and convicted of espionage and hanged at Tappan, New York, on 2 October. Arnold, however, makes good his escape and joins the British Army with the rank of brigadier general.

- **British troops leave New York**
British troops board ships in New York harbour and sail away, ending the Crown's military presence in the former North American colonies three months after the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris.
25 November 1783

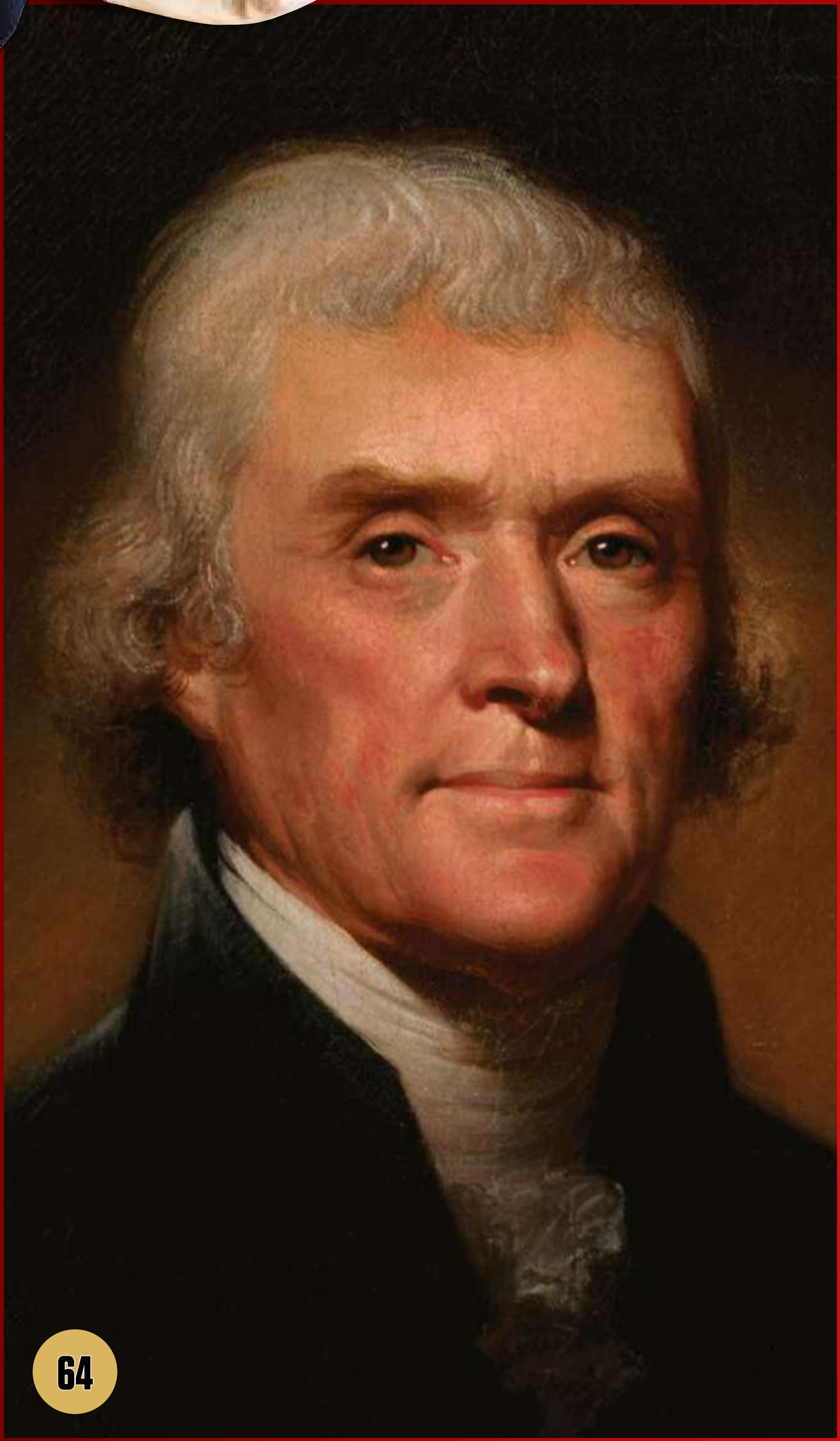
- **British victory at Camden**
Early in his tenure as senior British field commander in the South, General Charles Cornwallis routs American forces under General Horatio Gates at the Battle of Camden in South Carolina.
16 August 1780

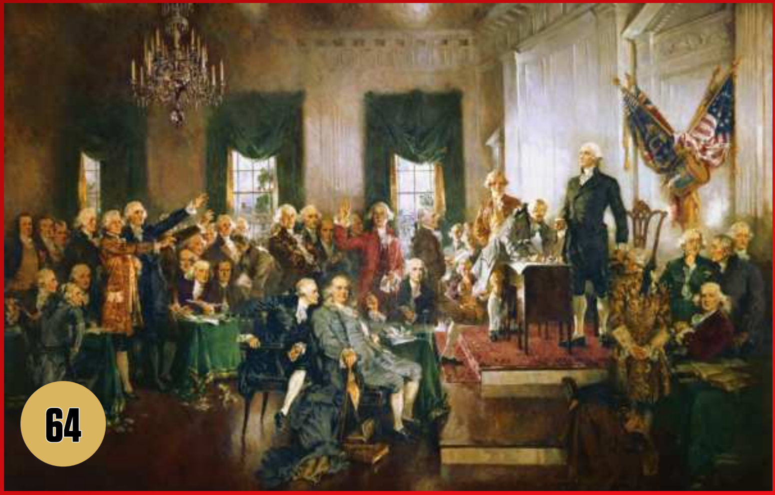
- **Tories tumble at King's Mountain**
During a battle that lasts just slightly longer than an hour, loyalists accompanied by a handful of British regulars are defeated by colonial militiamen at King's Mountain on the border between the Carolinas.
7 October 1780

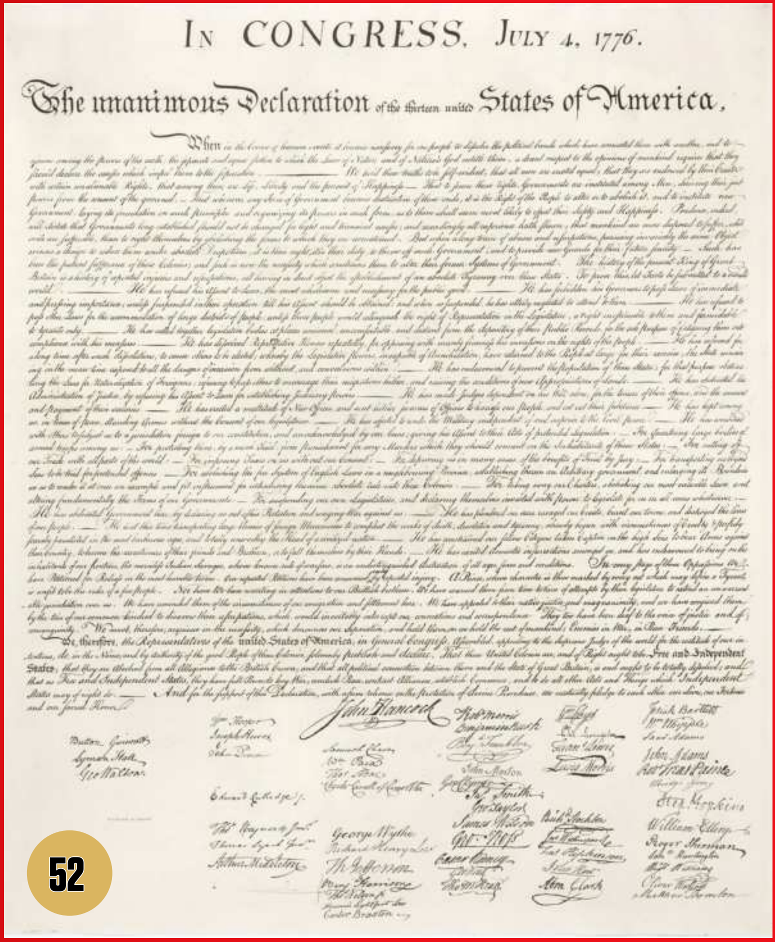
- **Morgan masterful at Cowpens**
A Continental Army and militia force under General Daniel Morgan nearly annihilates the British command of Colonel Banastre Tarleton at Cowpens, South Carolina - one of history's best-executed set-piece battles.
17 January 1781

- **Cornwallis prevails at Guilford Courthouse**
The British Army under General Cornwallis wins the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, defeating the Americans under General Nathanael Greene, but the cost is high in killed and wounded.
15 March 1781

- **Decisive victory at Yorktown**
The Anglo-French army of George Washington and the Comte de Rochambeau accepts the surrender of the British under General Cornwallis at Yorktown, sealing the American victory in the Revolutionary War.
19 October 1781






IN CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

Birth of a nation

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution marked the Founding Fathers' creation of the United States of America

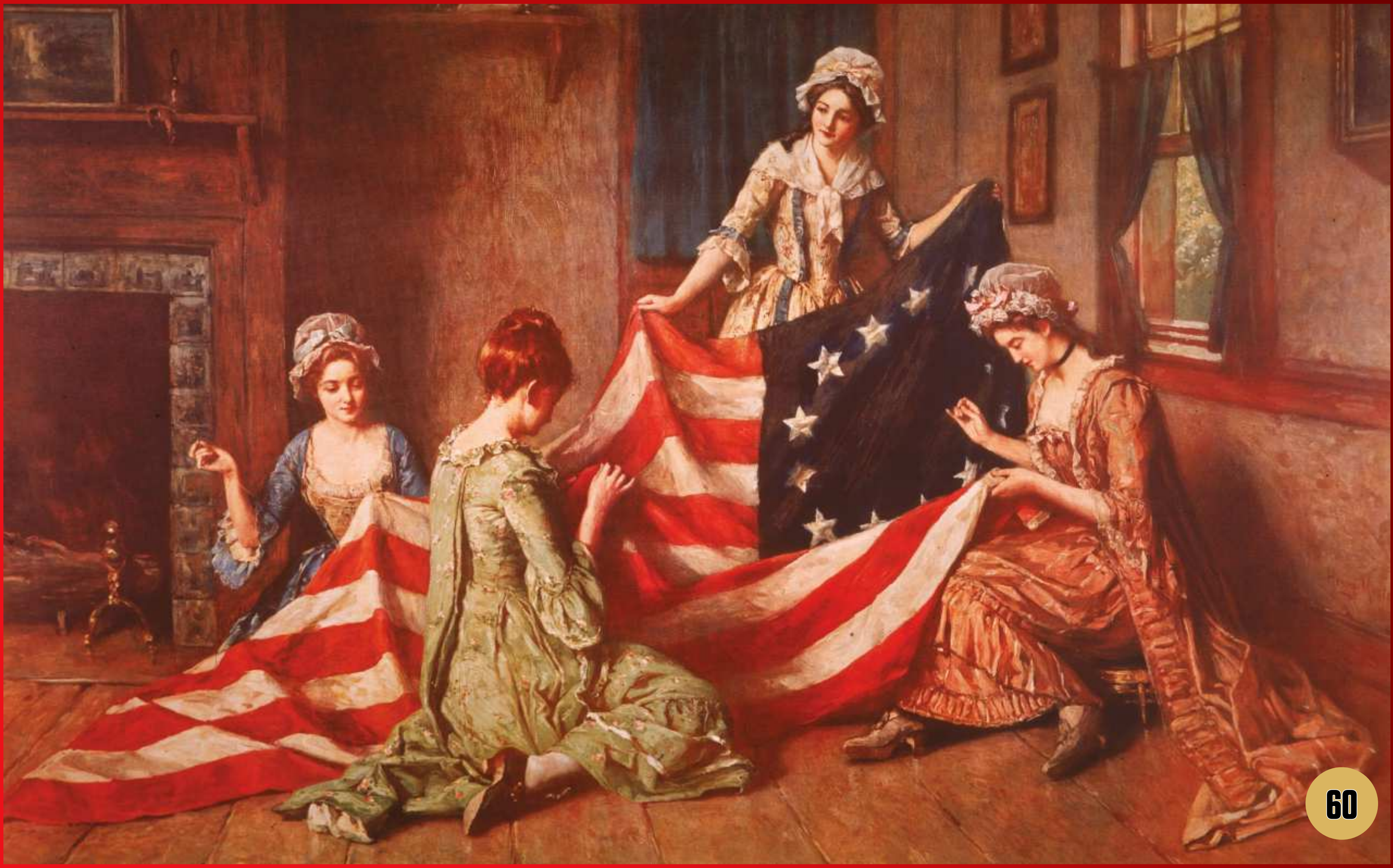
052 The Declaration of Independence

060 Betsy Ross & the first American flag

064 Supreme Law of the Land

074 The Bill of Rights

078 The Founding Fathers and slavery



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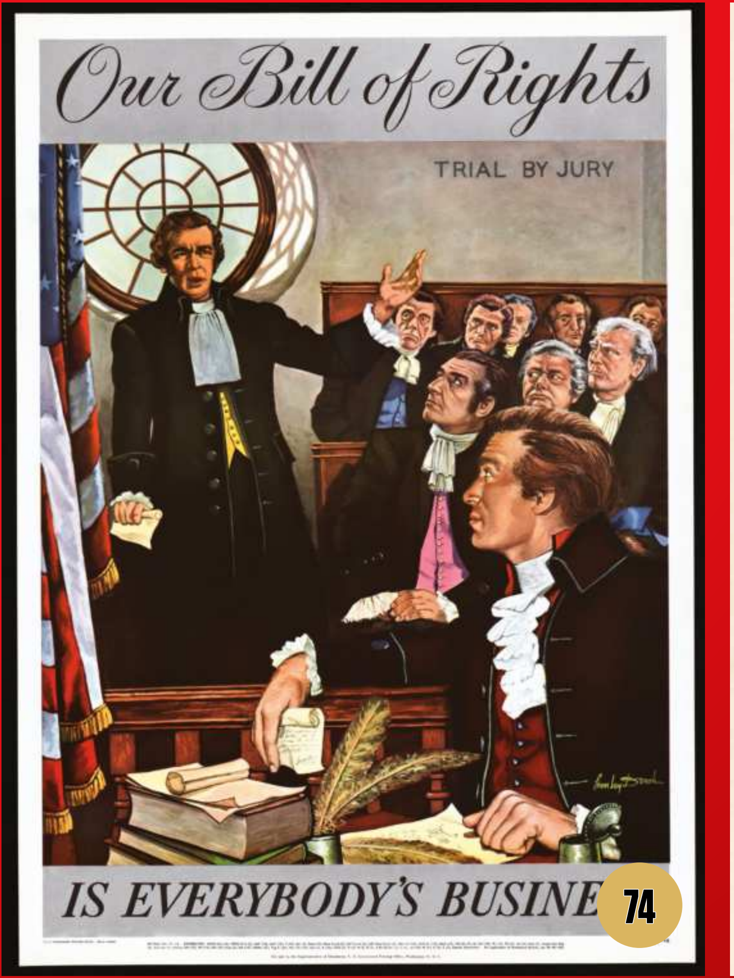
Our Bill of Rights
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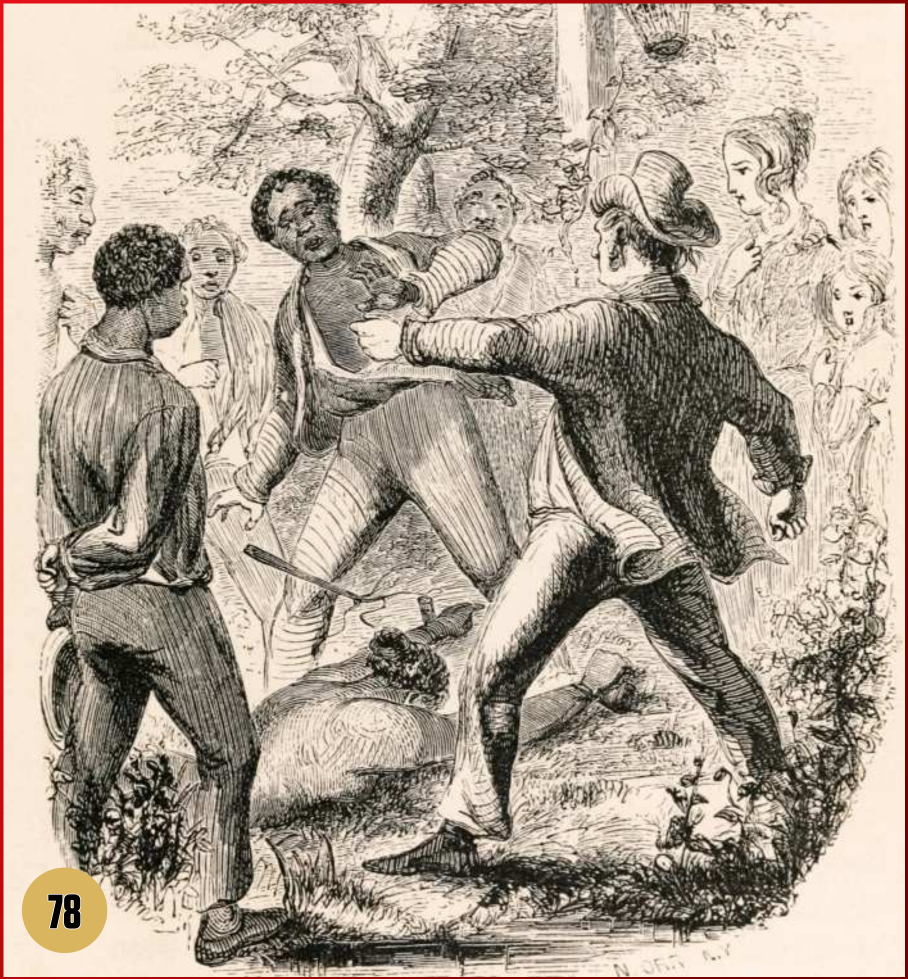

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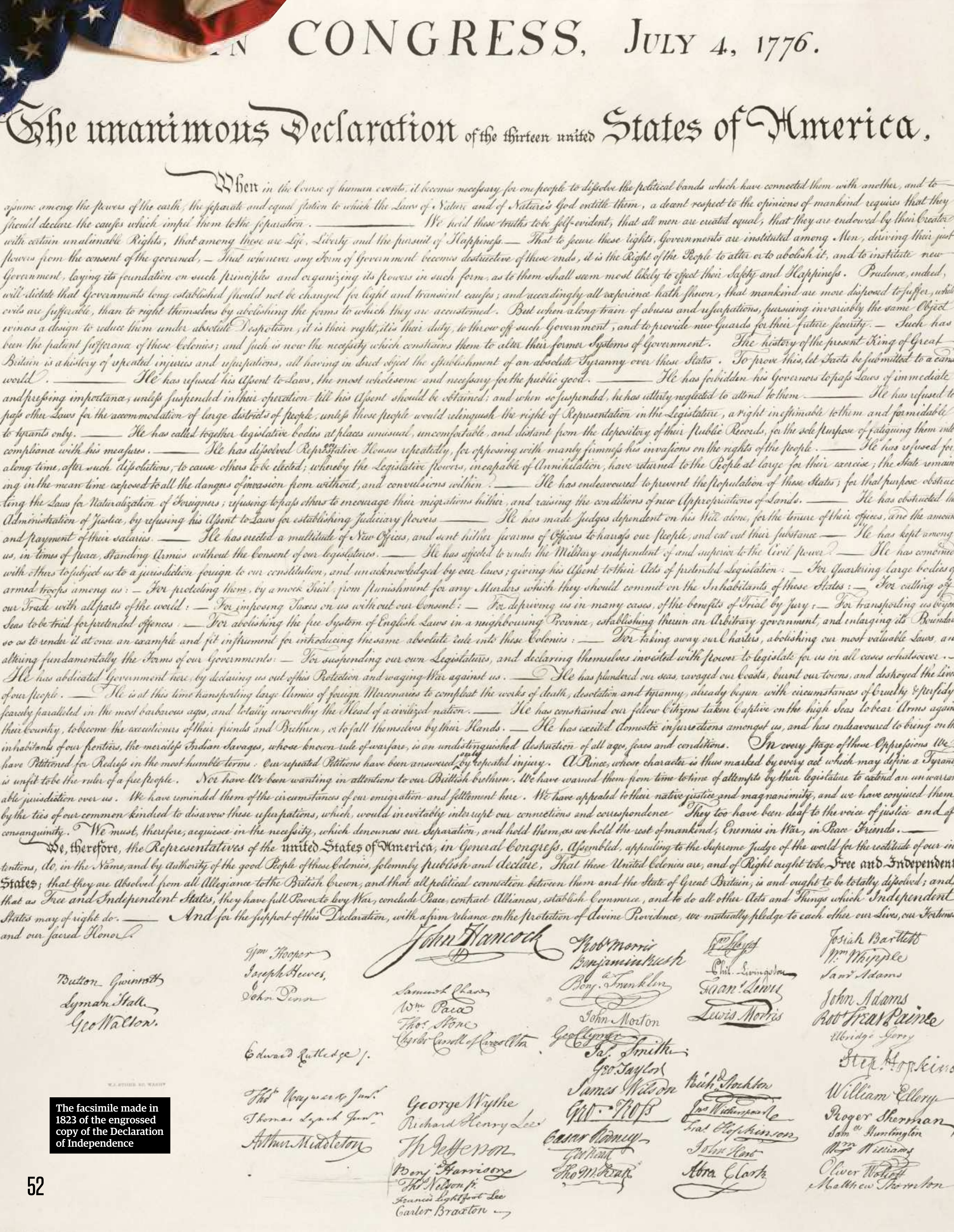


N CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes neceſsary for one people to diſsolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to
aſsume among the powers of the earth, the ſeparate and equal ſtation to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they
ſhould declare the cauſes which impel them to the ſeparation. —— We hold these truths to be ſelf-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator
with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happineſs. — That to ſecure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just
powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new
Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happineſs. Prudence, indeed,
will dictate that Governments long established ſhould not be changed for light and transient cauſes; and accordingly all experience hath ſhewn, that mankind are more diſposed to ſuffer, whil
evils are ſufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and uſurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object
evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future ſecurity. — Such has
been the patient ſufferance of these Colonies; and ſuch is now the neceſsity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great
Britain is a history of repeated injuries and uſurpations, all having in direct object the eſtablishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be ſubmitted to a cand
world. —— He has refused his Aſsent to Laws, the most wholesome and neceſsary for the public good. —— He has forbidden his Governors to paſs Laws of immediate
and preſsing importance, unleſs ſuspended in their operation till his Aſsent should be obtained; and when so ſuspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them. —— He has refused t
paſs other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unleſs those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right ineſtimable to them and formidable
to tyrants only. —— He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them int
compliance with his meaſures. —— He has diſsolved Repreſentative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmneſs his invaſions on the rights of the people. —— He has refused for
a long time, after such diſsolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remain
ing in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. —— He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstruc
ting the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to paſs others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. —— He has obstructed th
Administration of Justice, by refusing his Aſsent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers. —— He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amoun
and payment of their salaries. —— He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither ſwarms of Officers to harraſs our people, and eat out their ſubstance. —— He has kept among
us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures. —— He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. —— He has combined
with others to ſubject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Aſsent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: — For Quartering large bodies of
armed troops among us: — For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: — For cutting off
our Trade with all parts of the world: — For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: — For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: — For transporting us beyo
Seas to be tried for pretended offences: — For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Bounda
so as to render it at once an example and fit inſtrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies: —— For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, an
altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments: — For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. —
He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. —— He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the Liv
of our people. —— He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy
ſcarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation. —— He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms again
their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands. — He has excited domestic inſurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on th
inhabitants of our frontiers, the mercileſs Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, ſexes and conditions. In every ſtage of these Oppreſsions We
have Petitioned for Redreſs in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyran
is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarran
able jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and ſettlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them
by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these uſurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of
consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the neceſsity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends. —

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congreſs, Aſsembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our in
tentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, ſolemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent
States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally diſsolved; and
that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent
States may of right do. —— And for the ſupport of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortune
and our ſacred Honor.

John Hancock

Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
Geo Walton.

Wm Hooper
Joseph Hewes,
John Penn

Edward Rutledge 1.

Thos Heyward Junr.
Thomas Lynch Junr.
Arthur Middleton

Samuel Chase
Wm Paca
Thos Stone
Charles Carroll of Carrollton

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Benja Harrison
Thos Nelson jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

Robt Morris
Benjamin Rush
Benja. Franklin
John Morton
Geo Clymer
Jas. Smith
Geo. Taylor
James Wilson
Geo. Ross
Caesar Rodney
Geo Read
Tho M:Kean

Wm Floyd
Phil. Livingston
Frans. Lewis
Lewis Morris
Richd Stockton
Jno Witherspoon
Fras. Hopkinson
John Hart
Abra Clark

Josiah Bartlett
Wm Whipple
Saml Adams
John Adams
Robt Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry
Step. Hopkins
William Ellery
Roger Sherman
Saml Huntington
Wm Williams
Oliver Wolcott
Matthew Thornton

W.J. STONE SC. WASHN

The facsimile made in 1823 of the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence

July 1776

The Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence was the founding document of the new United States and set forth the reasons for America's separation from Britain

The first successful English colonies were planted in America in the early-17th century, with Virginia being established in 1607 and the Plymouth Bay Colony in 1620. Others followed, and by the late-18th century, there were 13 such colonies clustered along the eastern shore of North America.

For the most part, the inhabitants of these thriving colonies, of which there were roughly 2.4 million in 1775, were loyal English subjects of the Crown. Several events conspired to turn a large portion of them away from their former allegiance and eventually seek independence from Britain. Ironically, much of it stemmed from Britain's enormous success in the Seven Years' War, played out in the American theatre in the form of the French and Indian War. By its end, Britain was everywhere triumphant, having wrested Canada from its French overlords.

Britain was, however, now saddled with enormous debt, a significant portion of which had been incurred in the defence of its American colonies. It was only right, most members of parliament in London believed, that the colonists should have to pay for their own defence. New taxes would be imposed and the Stamp Act of 1765 soon followed.

This was the first direct tax that Britain had levied on its American colonists, and it was widely resented. The issue for the colonists was that it had been imposed by the distant parliament, and not by representatives of their own in provincial American legislatures. The colonies had no representatives in parliament and this seemed unjust. "Taxation without representation is tyranny," summed up the deep dissatisfaction of many American colonists, who considered themselves genuine Englishmen and entitled to all the same rights.

Revolutionary agitation increased and by the 1770s, a growing number of colonists, calling themselves Patriots, were at odds with Britain. Relations had not been helped by the Boston Massacre of 1770, in which British soldiers shot and killed several Americans during a mob incident.

© Wiki, Getty Images

The imposition of a widely despised tax on tea in 1773 led to the Boston Tea Party, in which colonists disguised as Native Americans dumped imported British tea overboard into Boston Harbor.

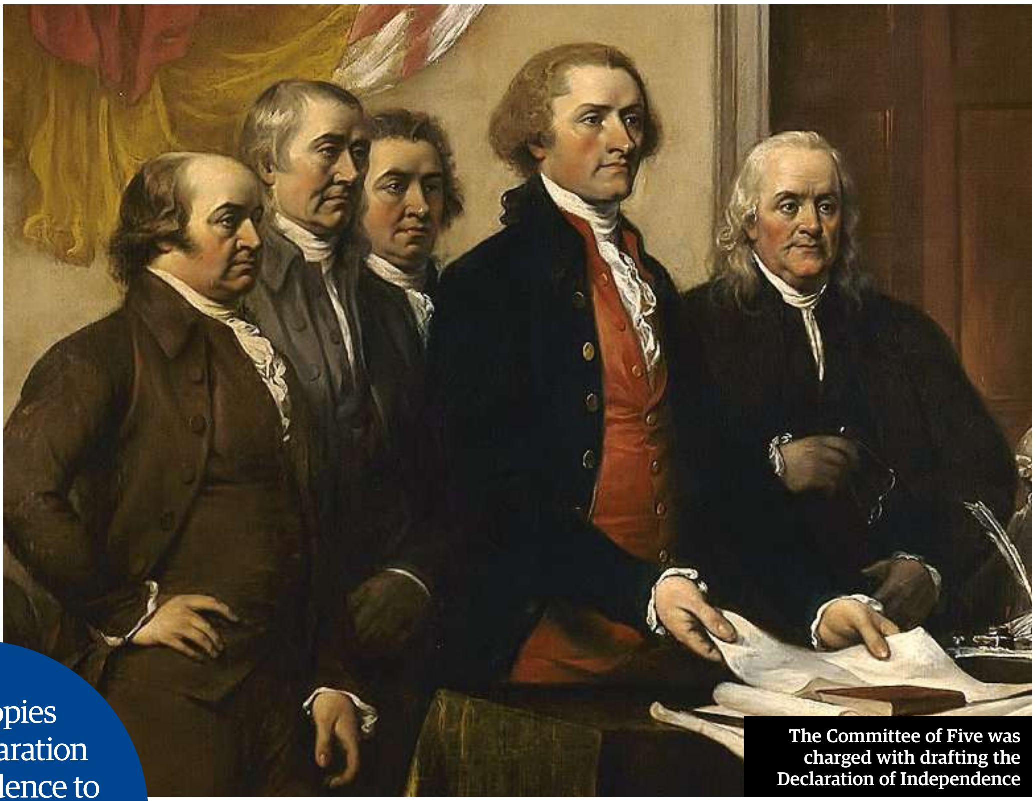
The so-called Intolerable Acts, by which parliament sought to punish uppity Bostonians by shutting its harbour to commercial traffic and other disagreeable measures, evoked great sympathy from the other colonies, most of which sent delegates to take part in the First Continental Congress in September 1774 in Philadelphia. Opposition to the government of King George III had now become organised and widespread through the American colonies.

A shooting war began on 19 April 1775 at the Battles of Lexington and Concord when Massachusetts militiamen sought to prevent the destruction of their munitions stores by a detachment of British soldiers. The American Revolution had started in earnest. General George Washington was appointed commander of the Continental Army and forced the king's troops to evacuate Boston in early 1776, but by spring of that year, New York City had been captured by the British, and he was in full retreat.

It was now nearing the middle of June 1776, and the war for independence had been ongoing since the previous April. Not all wished for an irrevocable break with Britain, but the time for restraint was fast receding as the war continued. On 7 June, Richard Henry Lee, a delegate from Virginia, moved the Second Continental Congress, which had been in session since May 1775, to resolve "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved".

The Congress, meeting in the Philadelphia State House in Pennsylvania, now concluded that it was time for the new republic to explain and justify its motives to the world in seeking to break with Britain. A formal declaration of nationhood would also bring the welcome benefit of allowing the sovereign United States to make treaties and alliances with foreign states for the support of the ongoing war for independence.

Initial copies of the Declaration of Independence to be disseminated to the public were printed in the Caslon typeface



The Committee of Five was charged with drafting the Declaration of Independence

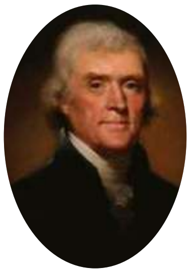
On 11 June, the Committee of Five, so named because it consisted of five picked delegates, was created and entrusted with the job of composing this Declaration of Independence. It selected the various articles that the document would contain, but the primary task of writing it fell to 33-year-old Thomas Jefferson of Virginia.

Jefferson would prove to be a remarkably able choice. A leading member of the colony's plantation-owning gentry, Jefferson had been educated at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg where he began studying in 1760. After completing his studies in 1762, Jefferson would then study law for the next four years under the tutelage of George Wythe for whom he worked as a clerk in Wythe's law practice. A voracious reader who devoured books on all manner of subjects, Jefferson had also come to accept Deism, which taught that a distant God had created the world and man and then left man to his own devices. Jefferson would keep such beliefs mainly to himself during his lifetime.

There were others besides Jefferson, of course, though none would have so direct a hand in writing the Declaration. There was the estimable elder statesman Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, but the bon vivant polymath, drained by a journey to Canada and stricken by gout, would participate little in the Committee's work - though he did receive a draft of the document from Jefferson to look over. There was puritanical John Adams, the Boston lawyer who had once defended the British redcoats being tried for their role in the Boston Massacre, and now a leading proponent of rupture with Britain. Rounding out the Committee of Five was the Connecticut lawyer Roger Sherman, as well as Robert R Livingston, also a lawyer, heralding from New York.

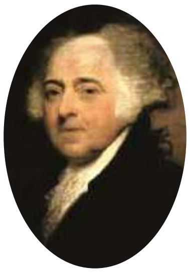
Writing their way to independence

On 11 June 1776, Congress appointed five men to draft the Declaration that would serve as the new nation's justification for independence



Thomas Jefferson

It fell to Thomas Jefferson of Virginia to draft the Declaration of Independence, in which he had to justify the rebellion by laying out the reasons for separation from the mother country. Jefferson faced the difficult task of both encouraging a revolt while also maintaining Americans' respect for authority.



John Adams

Flinty Boston lawyer John Adams, 40 years of age, would later claim that he had initially been offered the task of writing the Declaration, though Thomas Jefferson seemed to have no recollection of this. He suggested only a single alteration of the rough draft shown him by Jefferson. He was later elected the second president of the United States.

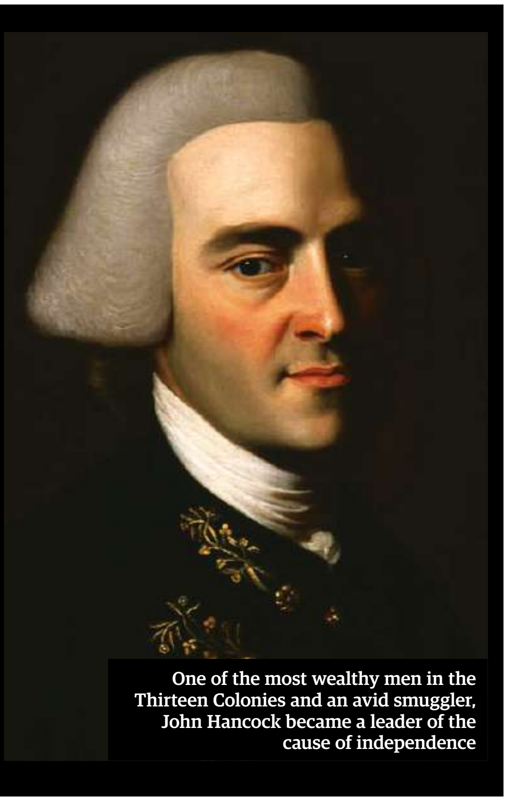
John Hancock: Boston Patriot, merchant and smuggler with the famous signature

Though his father died when John Hancock was just a boy, he had good luck when a wealthy Boston uncle, Thomas Hancock, took him into his home on Beacon Hill. Raised with much love, he attended Boston Latin School and then Harvard College. After his education was completed, Uncle Thomas brought him into his mercantile firm as a clerk. At the age of 23, he was dispatched by his uncle to London to meet with the company's agents. Within a few years, Uncle Thomas had died and John, now 27, took possession of what was said to be the biggest fortune ever compiled in New England.

Rocky times lay ahead. The passage by parliament of the Stamp Act in 1765 had an enormous effect on Hancock's operations. It did not help at all that, by all accounts, Hancock was the foremost smuggler in all of the Thirteen Colonies. He would often bring in illicit goods secretively, by ship, and thereby avoid the tax to be paid upon them. Now, every piece of paper that he needed to conduct his business required a stamp proving that it had been paid through the king's agents. This would be an expensive tax and Hancock was soon a leader of the opposition to it. Parliament's much-reviled tax on tea, which was passed in 1773, made Hancock fear the arrival of large quantities of cheap British East India tea that would undercut his own contraband Dutch product.

The outbreak of the Revolution found him firmly favouring the cause of independence. He was appointed president of the Second Continental Congress held in Philadelphia in 1775. When the Declaration of Independence was made available for signing by the delegates on 2 July 1776, he signed his own name to it, in the middle of the page just below the text itself. "There!" it is claimed Hancock said. "John Bull can read my name without spectacles."

Hancock's name has since become an American byword for a signature.



One of the most wealthy men in the Thirteen Colonies and an avid smuggler, John Hancock became a leader of the cause of independence

There are four major parts of the Declaration: firstly, the Preamble; the next, in the second paragraph, an exposition of the philosophical basis of a government predicated upon the natural rights; the extensive listing of grievances against the king; and finally the actual 'declaration of independence' by the United States.

Jefferson's primary object in drafting the document was to lay out the specific reasons that had caused the colonies to seek a break with Britain, and so the document itself lists the various ills that King George III had imposed on his erstwhile American subjects. At the beginning of the Declaration, in what is known as the Preamble, Jefferson wrote that "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind" required such a statement. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, under the best of circumstances to persuade the outside world of the rightness of the American cause since there was a deep and longstanding prejudice in other countries against rebellion of any kind against recognised political authority. So Jefferson couched what Americans were doing not as a rebellion in the generally understood sense of the term, but as a revolt of a free people against a king attempting to usurp or squelch their ancient, natural rights.

What followed after the Preamble was Jefferson's philosophy of government: "We hold these truths to be self-evident," Jefferson wrote, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Next followed the list of grievances that the American colonists had against the King George III. Though it might appear, after reading the stirring opening paragraphs, that the listing of grievances was an exercise in monotony, the list was actually the heart of the document. Each grievance was one more part of the bill of particulars that the colonists were levelling against the king, thereby justifying the revolt.

> Abraham Lincoln cited the promise of liberty as justification for the North's war to preserve the Union during the Civil War

There are 27 charges made against King George III to demonstrate that he was attempting to subjugate his American subjects. He was, so Jefferson stated, "a prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant". The first charge was that the king had refused to give "his assent to laws" which were needed for the public good. For a long time, the American colonies had been required to send their laws to the kings in Britain to obtain their approval, but George III had been especially apt to strike many of them down. Most of the stricken laws would have been burdensome to British trade with the colonies, so there was an underlying mercantile reason for the king in doing so.

Benjamin Franklin

The 70-year-old Philadelphia printer and scientist Benjamin Franklin, just returned from a difficult journey to Canada, fell ill with gout just before the Committee started meeting. Though he did not contribute to its drafting, he did read the rough draft and suggest revisions.

Roger Sherman

Elderly New Englander Roger Sherman was a Puritan to his core and a staunch supporter of independence. He served mainly as an editor of the document prepared by Jefferson.

Robert R Livingston

Robert R Livingston was a rich New York lawyer appointed to take part in the drafting of the Declaration. He was one of the more conservative members of the Committee and had been the most cool among them about voting for independence.

The Assembly Room where the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence

> "On and on Jefferson continued. The king had crippled the colonial judiciary. He had harassed the colonials with his tax revenue officials…"

> Two of the Declaration's signers, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, would die on the same day – 4 July 1826

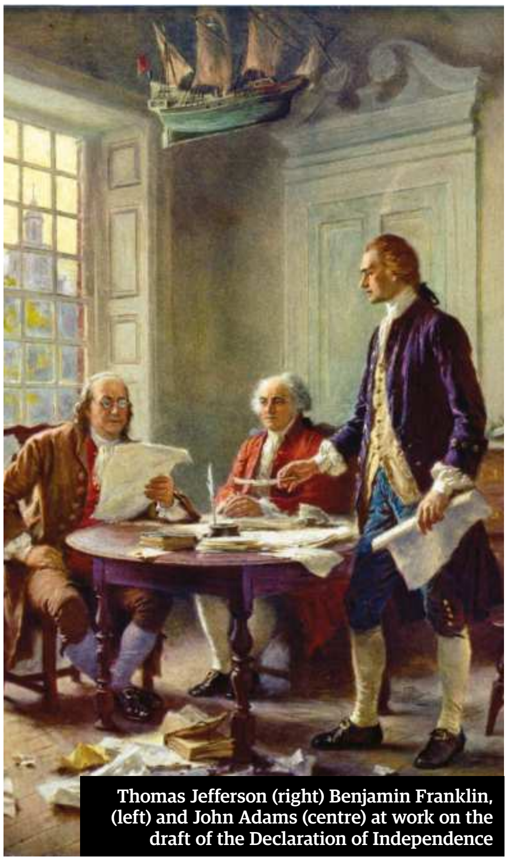
In a similar vein, George was also accused of refusing to allow royal governors in the colonies to pass laws without his approval, which he then withheld, sometimes for years on end, resulting in an effective veto of the measure.

Jefferson also charged that the king had refused to allow for the incorporation of new districts that could then send delegates to the colonial legislatures. American settlers had moved further westwards, away from the Atlantic seaboard, following the French and Indian War, but these newly settled regions almost always then entered the Patriot camp opposed to the Crown. London would therefore not recognise them unless they explicitly sacrificed the right to representation in the legislatures of their colonies.

The fifth charge alleged that George had again and again dissolved colonial legislatures. The seventh charge complained that the naturalisation of the foreign-born was being prevented and immigration to the colonies slowed. This was done in the main because the foreigners tended now to come from countries not friendly to Britain and ended up swelling the Patriot camp. The king was also making it harder, Jefferson contended, to secure good title to land, especially in the lands to the west of the Alleghenies and north of the Ohio River. These settlers, once again, were usually inclined to support the Patriot – ie anti-British – cause.

On and on Jefferson continued, firing broadside after broadside. The king had crippled the colonial judiciary. He had harassed the colonials with his tax revenue officials. He had quartered British soldiers in American homes and the colonists also had to pay for their upkeep, even though it was a time of peace. Colonial trade had been severely hindered by royal decree, Jefferson charged. Taxes had been levied on the colonists without their consent; it was taxation without representation. Another charge complained that free English law in Quebec had been abolished and that this had resulted in the establishment of "arbitrary government" there. The Quebec Act of 1774 had given legal recognition to the Roman Catholic Church and French law in the formerly French-ruled province of Quebec. Most American colonials were deeply anti-Catholic, and this legal recognition rankled. Making matters worse, the borders of the province had been pushed out to the Ohio River, and these territories had been decreed off-limits to settlement by English-speaking settlers. Jefferson wrote also that George was sending large numbers of foreign, that is, non-British, mercenary troops to America to put down the rebellion.

The final part of the Declaration of Independence was the one in which the colonies actually declared



Thomas Jefferson (right) Benjamin Franklin, (left) and John Adams (centre) at work on the draft of the Declaration of Independence their formal independence. Jefferson ended his text with a flourish, writing that "for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour".

With the Declaration of Independence completed, and it having undergone some revisions with the rest of the Committee of Five, it was submitted to Congress on 28 June. On 2 July, the 56 colonial delegates voted on the Declaration. It was approved, against no opposition, though the text itself underwent some substantial revisions by Congress, one of which was the inclusion, in the final part of the Declaration, of the same verbiage used in Richard Henry Lee's earlier motion. The revisions were completed and the document ratified on 4 July 1776, the date forever associated with the birth of America as an independent republic.

The united colonies were now states, separate from Britain, and though there was still a long war ahead to be fought, the United States of America had been officially inaugurated. That they were committing treason, at least in the eyes of the Crown, was not lost on the men who gathered in the Philadelphia State House. Two of the signers of the Declaration were Benjamin Harrison of Virginia and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts. It is said that after they had both signed, Harrison, a very rotund man, in a bit of gallows humour jested to Gerry, who was himself extremely thin, that, "When the hanging time comes… I shall have the advantage over you… with me it will be over in a minute. But you will be dancing in the air for an hour after I'm gone."

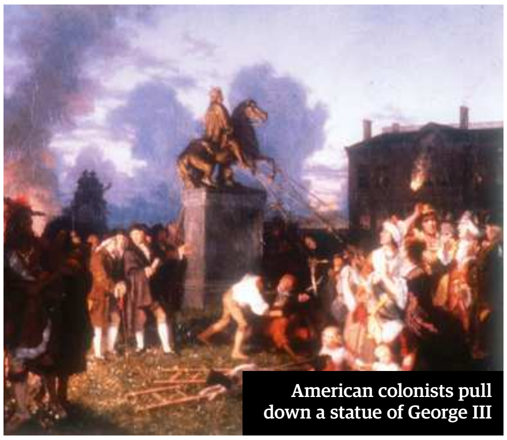
It is also reported that John Hancock, president of the Second Continental Congress, took note of the seriousness of what they were doing, warning, "We must be unanimous; there must be no pulling in different ways; we must all hang together."

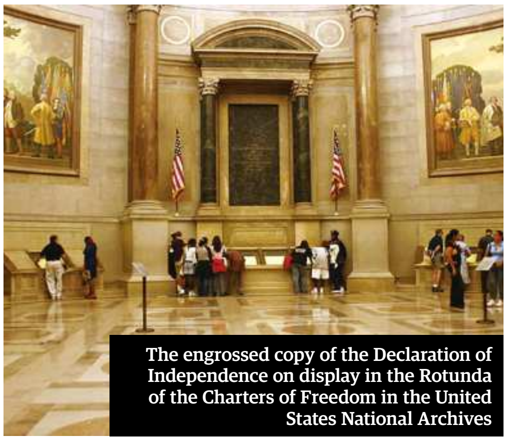
To which Benjamin Franklin then replied, "Yes, we must all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately."

The signed copy of the Declaration of Independence is on display in the US National Archives in Washington, DC

John Hancock

The famously large signature of John Hancock, president of the Second Continental Congress


American colonists pull down a statue of George III


The engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence on display in the Rotunda of the Charters of Freedom in the United States National Archives

The king who lost America

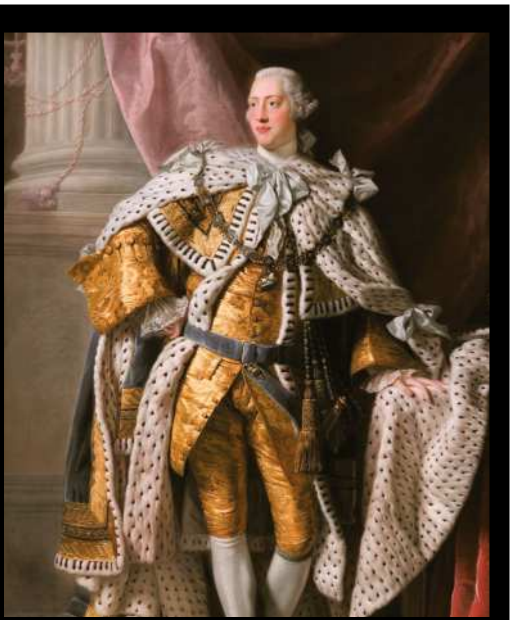
King George III received harsh criticism in the Declaration of Independence. Who was this man and was he really as bad as Jefferson made him out to be?

King George III tried and failed to prevent the Thirteen Colonies from gaining their independence, and has received a large share of the blame for their loss ever since. Having come to the throne of Britain in 1760, he was a constitutional monarch, compelled to govern his realm not by royal fiat but in conjunction with parliament. Politically, George was prone to stubbornness, and this made governing difficult as he was extremely reluctant to condone changes in policy even when they were wise and expedient.

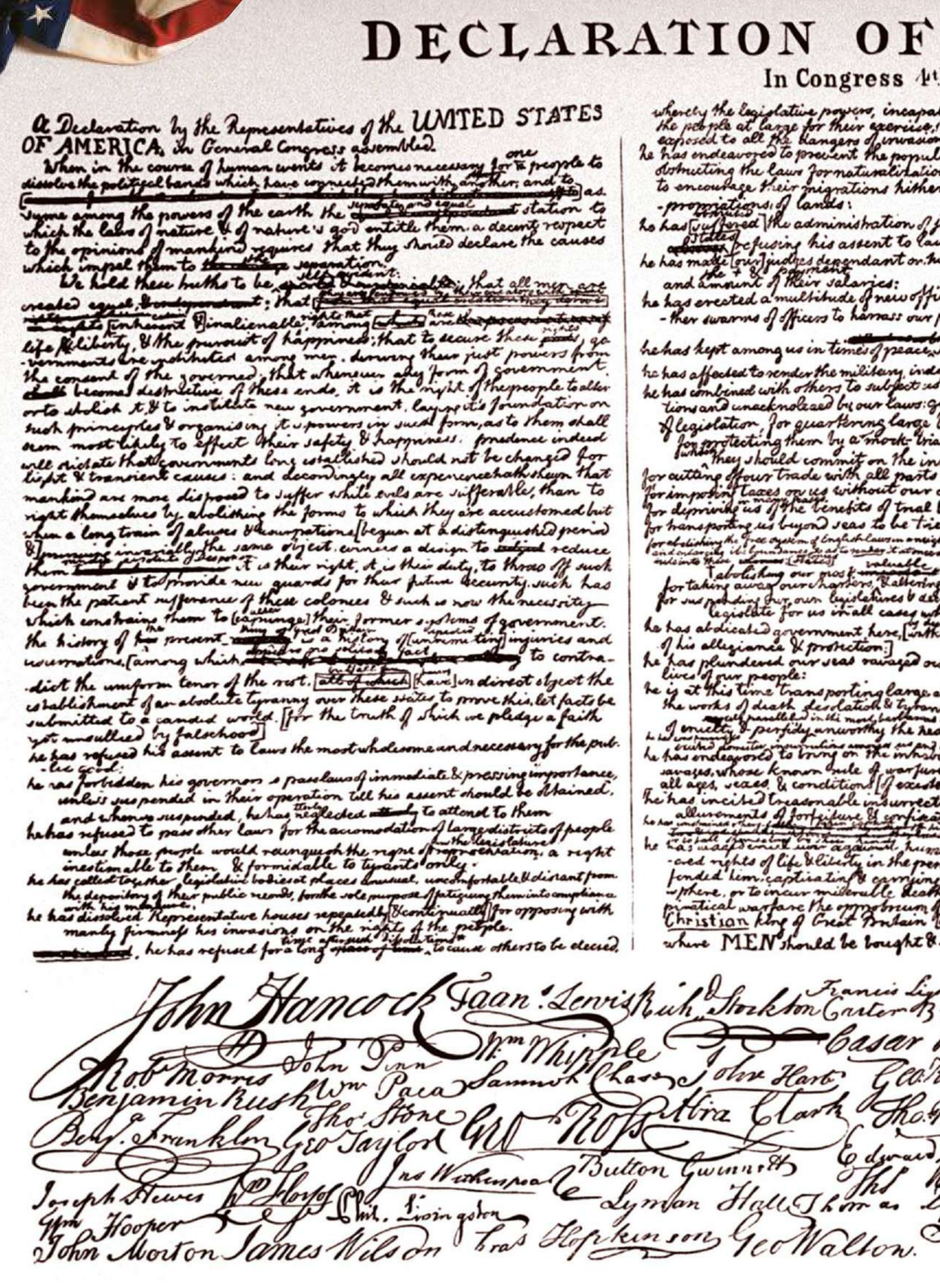
This stubbornness would hinder him in his relations with the American colonies leading up to the Revolution. He would not countenance any alteration of course that might have quelled the growing colonial unrest. He had sympathetic majorities in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons during this time, and so could largely get his way with obedient ministers and a pliant parliament. Lord North was the king's prime minister and dutiful servant from 1770 to 1782, the period in which revolutionary fervour boiled over and resulted in outright war. During this time, North faithfully executed George's policies that ultimately would drive the colonies to independence, failing to act as a check on the misguided policies of his royal master.

George was called a tyrant by many angry colonists, and the Declaration of Independence contains a long list of some 27 colonial grievances against him. Many of these grievances had at their core a dismay at the king's failure to ensure that the American colonists, who saw themselves as Englishmen, were accorded all of the rights of Englishmen. Yet not all Americans saw him as a monster. There were substantial numbers who remained loyal to the Crown right through to the end of the War of Independence. Even John Adams, one of the drafters of the Declaration itself, and a future president of the United States, thought some criticism of him to be too harsh. "I never believed George to be a tyrant in disposition and nature," he said of the king. "I always believed him to be deceived by his courtiers and on both sides of the Atlantic, and in his official capacity only cruel."

Whatever judgment may be made about George as a man, it was his American policy



that largely brought about the colonial rebellion and saw a new nation come into being. Notwithstanding the tumultuousness of his years on the throne, he would enjoy a long reign, extending until 1820. However, in his last decade he was mentally incapacitated, probably stricken with porphyria, and his son reigned as prince regent from 1811 until George III's death in January 1820.



DECLARATION OF

In Congress 4th

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for ~~a~~ one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to [illegible] assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal ~~[illegible]~~ station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to ~~the change~~ the separation.

We hold these truths to be ~~sacred & undeniable~~ self-evident; that all men are created equal, ~~& independent~~; that ~~[illegible]~~ they are endowed by their creator with ~~[illegible]~~ rights [inherent &] inalienable rights; that among ~~[illegible]~~ these are ~~[illegible]~~ life & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these ~~ends~~ rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government ~~shall~~ becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations [begun at a distinguished period & ~~pursuing~~] invariably the same object, evinces a design to ~~subject~~ reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government & to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to [expunge] alter their former systems of government. the history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of [unremitting] repeated injuries and usurpations, [among which, appears no solitary fact ~~[illegible]~~ to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, [all of which] [have] in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. [for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood]

he has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good:

he has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate & pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected ~~utterly~~ to attend to them.

he has refused to pass other laws for the accomodation of large districts of people unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them & formidable to tyrants only.

he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable & distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

he has dissolved Representative houses repeatedly [& continually] for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

~~[illegible]~~ he has refused for a long ~~space of time~~ time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected,

whereby the legislative powers, incapab
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exposed to all the dangers of invasion
he has endeavored to prevent the popul
obstructing the laws for naturalization
to encourage their migrations hither
-propriations of lands:
he has [suffered] the administration of j
states refusing his assent to law
he has made [our] judges dependant on h
and amount of their salaries:
he has erected a multitude of new offi
-ther swarms of officers to harrass our p
he has kept among us in times of peace,
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for protecting them by a mock-tria
they should commit on the in
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for imposing taxes on us without our c
for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial b
for transporting us beyond seas to be trie
for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neig
and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once
rule into these ~~colonies~~ [states]
abolishing our most valuable
for taking away our charters, & altering
for suspending our own legislatures & de
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of his allegiance & protection:]
he has plundered our seas, ravaged ou
lives of our people:
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scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous
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all ages, sexes, & conditions [of existe
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Christian king of Great Britain
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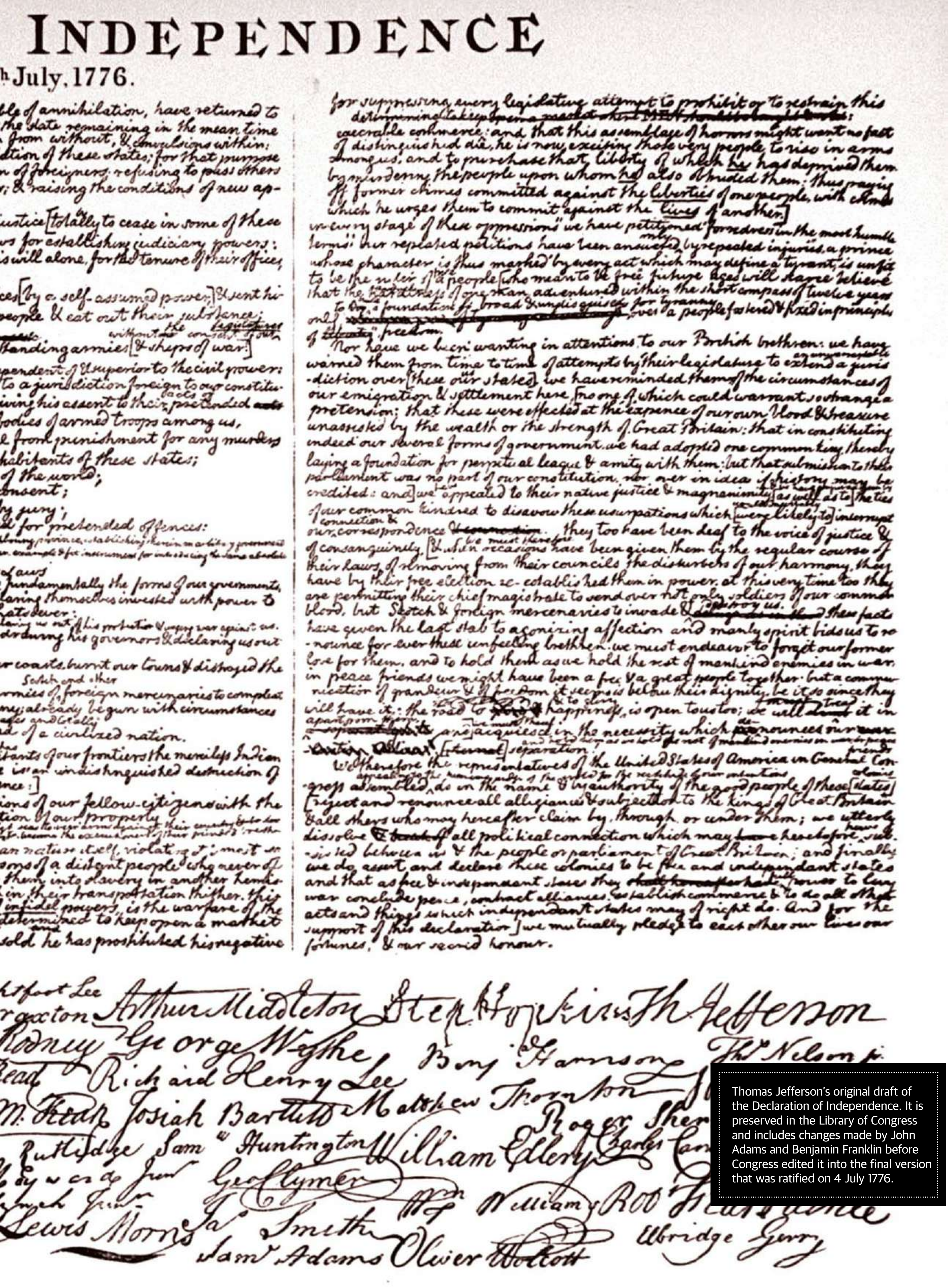
John Hancock
Fran. Lewis
Richd Stockton
Francis Lig
Carter B
Wm Whipple
Caesar
Robt Morris
John Penn
Saml Chase
John Hart
Geo
Benjamin Rush
Wm Paca
Abra Clark
Tho Stone
Geo Ross
Benja Franklin
Geo Taylor
Jno Witherspoon
Button Gwinnett
Edward
Joseph Hewes
Wm Floyd
Phil. Livingston
Lyman Hall
Thomas
Wm Hooper
John Morton
James Wilson
Fras Hopkinson
Geo Walton.



INDEPENDENCE

h July, 1776.

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; & raising the conditions of new ap-

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rs for establishing judiciary powers.
is will alone, for the tenure of their offices,

ces [by a self-assumed power] & sent hi-
people & eat out their substance.
without the consent of our legislatures
standing armies [& ships of war].
pendent of & superior to the civil power.
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of laws
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sons of a distant people who never of-
them into slavery in another hemis-
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determined to keep open a market
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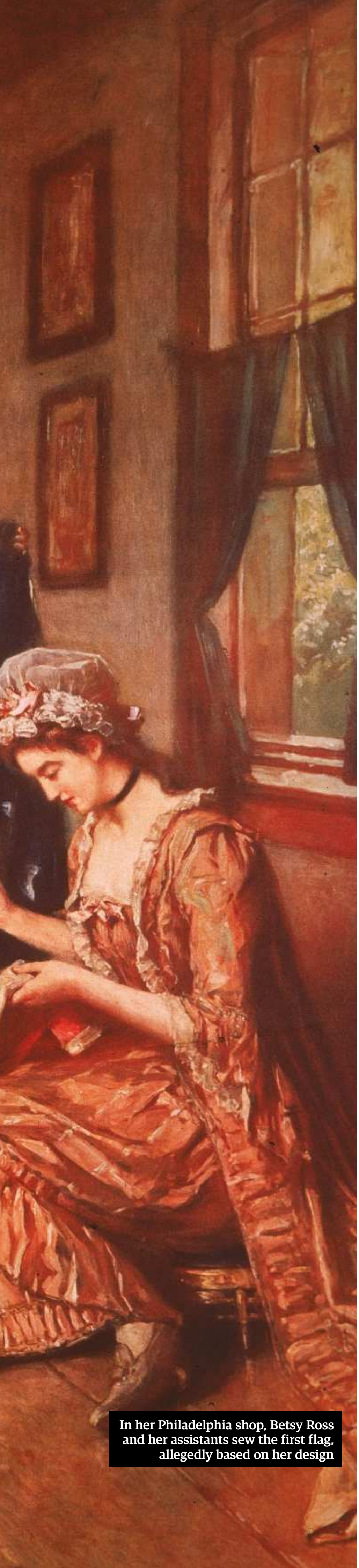
sold he has prostituted his negative

for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this
determining to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold:
execrable commerce: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact
of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms
among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them
by murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them: thus paying
off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes
which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.]
in every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble
terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. a prince
whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit
to be the ruler of a free people [who mean to be free. future ages will scarce believe
that the hardiness of one man, adventured within the short compass of twelve years
to lay a foundation so broad & undisguised for tyranny
only ~~~~ over a people fostered & fixed in principles
of ~~liberty~~ freedom.]
Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. we have
warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend a juris-
-diction over [these our states]. we have reminded them of the circumstances of
our emigration & settlement here [no one of which could warrant so strange a
pretension: that these were effected at the expence of our own blood & treasure
unassisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting
indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby
laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them: but that submission to their
parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea, if history may be
credited: and] we have appealed to their native justice & magnanimity [as well as to] the ties
of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which [were likely to] interrupt
connection &
our correspondence ~~& connection~~. they too have been deaf to the voice of justice &
we must therefore
of consanguinity, [& when occasions have been given them by the regular course of
their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they
have by their free election re-established them in power. at this very time too they
are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common
blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade & destroy us. these facts
have given the last stab to agonizing affection and manly spirit bids us to re-
-nounce for ever these unfeeling brethren. we must endeavor to forget our former
love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind enemies in war,
in peace friends. we might have been a free & a great people together; but a commu-
-nication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity. be it so, since they
& to glory
will have it: the road to ~~glory~~ & happiness, is open to us too; we will ~~climb~~ it in
apart from them,
~~a separate state~~ and acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our ~~ever-~~
~~-lasting Adieu!~~ [~~eternal~~] separation!
friends
We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Con-
colonies
-gress assembled, do in the name & by authority of the good people of these [states]
[reject and renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain
& all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly
have
dissolve ~~& break off~~ all political connection which may ~~have~~ heretofore sub-
-sisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain; and finally
we do assert and declare these colonies to be free and independant states
and that as free & independant states they ~~shall hereafter have~~ full power to levy
war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other
acts and things which independant states may of right do. And for the
support of this declaration] we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our
fortunes, & our sacred honour.

tfoot Lee
rraxton Arthur Middleton Step Hopkins Th Jefferson
Rodney George Wythe Benj Harrison Thos Nelson jr.
Read Richard Henry Lee
M. Kean Josiah Bartlett Matthew Thornton
Roger Sher
Rutledge Saml Huntington William Ellery Charles Car
Geo Clymer
William Robt
Lewis Morris Jas Smith
Elbridge Gerry
Saml Adams Oliver Wolcott

Thomas Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence. It is preserved in the Library of Congress and includes changes made by John Adams and Benjamin Franklin before Congress edited it into the final version that was ratified on 4 July 1776.



In her Philadelphia shop, Betsy Ross and her assistants sew the first flag, allegedly based on her design

Betsy Ross & the first American flag

The tale of the plucky Philadelphia seamstress fashioning the Stars and Stripes in her back room is well known, but is it true?

Betsy Ross made the first US flag. It's a story that's told in classrooms and museums across the nation, an accepted 'truth' of American history. However, the fanciful account – originally presented by her grandson – is highly debated. First brought to the public in 1870, nearly a full century after the American Revolution, historians have cast doubts on whether the expert Philadelphia seamstress really did sew – and even help design – the iconic red, white and blue banner. Due to a lack of evidence, it's impossible to prove or disprove the theory either way, but it's a story that has enchanted Americans ever since, providing a familiar face to associate with the creation of this patriotic icon.

Betsy Ross, born Elizabeth Griscom on New Year's Day 1752, had a rough start in life. One of 17 children born to a craftsman father, she was educated in the Quaker tradition, working hard and living a frugal life. As a teenager, she was apprenticed to William Webster, an upholsterer. Here, Ross developed her talent with the needle, making mattresses, chair covers and window blinds.

While working for Webster, Ross fell in love with a fellow apprentice, John Ross. The couple eloped across the Delaware River and married in a tavern, so Betsy was promptly estranged from her family – not only for defying them, but for wedding a non-Quaker. Betsy's marital bliss was ruined a couple of years later, when John died in the Revolutionary War in 1776.

Running her upholstery business by herself, Betsy was in no position to turn down work. It's at this point that the story of the flag crosses paths with Betsy's life. According to her grandson William Canby, her deceased husband's uncle Colonel Ross and George Washington himself appeared at her door while she was "sitting sewing in her shop one day", asking her to help them make a flag for the United States. She replied that "she could try; she had never made one but if the pattern were shown to her she had not doubt of her ability to do it."

Allegedly, Betsy and Washington were already acquainted – she apparently prayed in the pew next to his in church, and was said to have embroidered his shirts for him. As for Colonel Ross, the pair were related by marriage. The two came to Betsy's house with a sketch of their idea for the new flag – a red-and-white striped background, with a blue patch and 13 six-pointed stars in the top-left corner.

The story goes that while poring over the designs, Betsy Ross disapproved of the six-pointed stars. When the Founding Father claimed five-pointed stars were tricky to make, Betsy replied that there was "nothing easier". She folded some paper a certain way and grabbing her scissors, she showed the men that aesthetically appealing five-pointed stars could be made with just one snip.

> Aside from the Stars and Stripes, the early US had a number of flags, including one with a rattlesnake in the middle, saying 'Don't Tread on Me'

© Getty Images

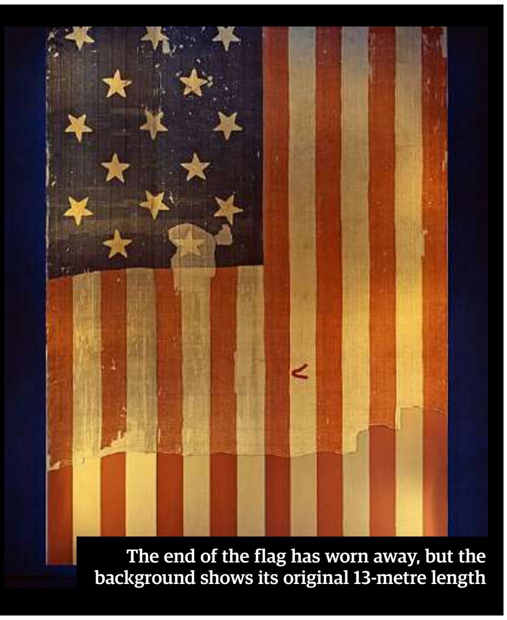
The Star-Spangled Banner

In the dusty depths of the Smithsonian Museum of American History in Washington, DC lies the star-spangled banner that inspired the national anthem. Made by talented seamstress Mary Pickersgill at the height of the 1812 war, the large flag (measuring 30 by 42 feet) is a marvel of patriotic craftwork. It once flew over Fort McHenry in Baltimore, to strike fear into the hearts of America's enemies.

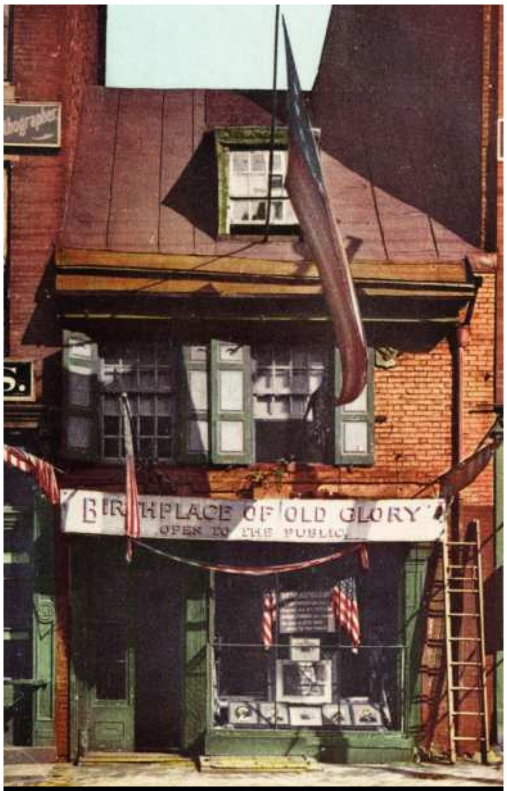
The city of Baltimore had long been anticipating an attack, and the commander at the city's Fort McHenry (Major George Armistead) wanted a massive flag to be the first thing that the British saw as they approached their target. In 1813, he commissioned a local seamstress, Mary Pickersgill, to stitch together the colours. By this time, there were 15 stars and stripes to represent each state.

Pickersgill drafted in the help of her daughters and an indentured African American servant. Using dyed English wool bunting and white cotton, the sizeable project was completed in just over a month, costing the government in excess of $400. It was hung from a 27-metre pole, so it could be seen from around the city.

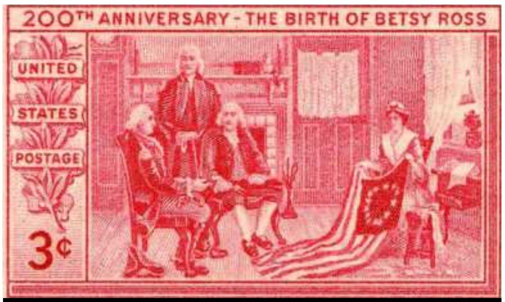
Francis Scott Key, a passing lawyer who had witnessed a battle at Fort McHenry, was so inspired by Pickersgill's flag that he wrote a song about it. Sure that the British would overwhelm the smaller American forces, he was pleasantly surprised to wake up the next morning, seeing the American flag – not the Union Jack – flying over the fort. His composition, known as *The Star-Spangled Banner*, would later become the American national anthem.



The end of the flag has worn away, but the background shows its original 13-metre length



This colourised image from 1900 outside the Betsy Ross House proudly declares it the 'Birthplace of Old Glory'


200TH ANNIVERSARY - THE BIRTH OF BETSY ROSS
UNITED
STATES
POSTAGE
3¢

Commissioned in 1952, this stamp commemorates the 200th anniversary of Betsy Ross's birth

They were amazed by her skill and incorporated it into the design. Colonel Ross apparently gave her an advance of £100 for the materials, so Betsy set to work creating a prototype.

The stars (one for each of the 13 colonies) were arranged in a circle, so no future state would be 'above' another. Allegedly, this was Ross's suggestion. The red-and-white stripes signified 'American values' – red for valour and hardiness, and white representing purity and innocence.

The current flag has 50 stars, but only 13 stripes – still representing the original 13 colonies

The 1870 case presented to the Philadelphia Historical Society by William Canby published this story at the height of flag enthusiasm. In the run-up to the Revolution's centennial, Americans were looking for new heroes who each made a valued contribution to the nation's history. Canby's story, largely based on family accounts, resonated with a great number of people – Betsy's resourcefulness and positive attitude won her a great many fans. Besides, women's involvement in the American Revolution had largely been swept under the carpet, and here was a skilful lady whose patriotism fitted the upright Victorian mould.

Among the more fanciful claims made in Canby's pamphlet was that Betsy Ross came up with the name 'United States of America', and even wrote a hymn that later inspired the French national anthem *La Marseillaise*, but neither of these claims were developed upon. Canby was only a young boy when his grandmother passed away, so the details he apparently recalled were possibly a little sketchy.

Despite a lack of contemporary evidence, the story of Betsy Ross made its mark on the national psyche. Since no other claims coming out of the woodwork were as detailed – or as impassioned – as Canby's, it made its way into the history books. Five years after Canby's account enchanted the nation, another descendant of Ross – J Franklin Reigart – published a book, further embellishing the family tale. It claimed she continued making flags for the US military for another 55 years, and that as well as Washington, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson frequently came by her store to admire her work.

The pieces of evidence historians have to support Betsy's relatives are few and far between. As the flag was not as widely revered as it is today, the documentation surrounding the first US flag is virtually non-existent, because it was not assumed to be a matter of great importance. The only hard, potential 'proof' of Ross's involvement is a receipt from the Pennsylvania State Navy Board, showing she was paid £15 for her work making standards for revolutionary ships. This suggests that she was indeed perfectly capable of doing the job Washington set her, but any acquaintance she had with him is also rather dubious.

The design for the flag was not actually finalised until after 1777. A 1782 'Congress of Confederation' chose the red, white and blue colour scheme when they designed the Great Seal of the US, and a painting of George Washington made after American independence still shows the six-pointed star design.

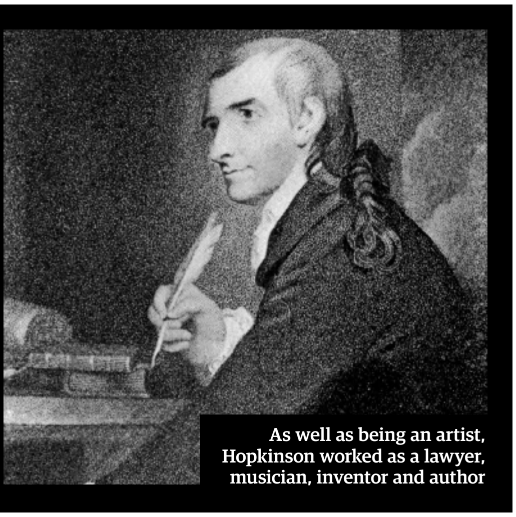
Ross's involvement in the creation of the first flag can neither be conclusively proven nor disproved. The lack of evidence is a cause for concern, but there's nothing to suggest that she definitely did not have anything to do with it. Canby's claim is perfectly plausible, and his story was certainly well received. The Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia is a popular spot for tourists on the city's historic trail, and recounts the seamstress's

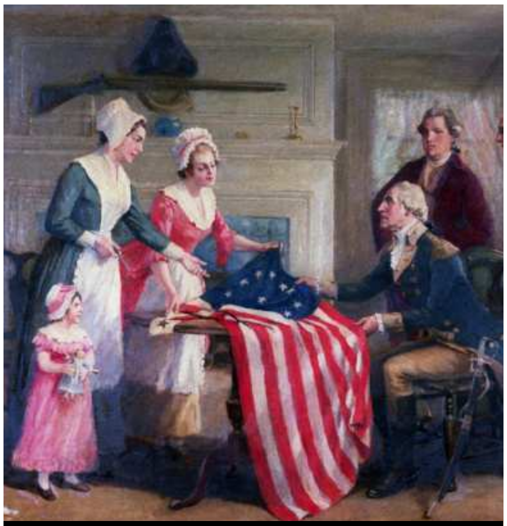
The Congressman's Flag

While the Betsy Ross story continues to be debated, another figure seems to have had a leading role in finalising the flag design - this time, with considerable documentary evidence. Francis Hopkinson, a Congressman from New Jersey and one of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence, is widely credited with drawing up the original flag.

Known to dabble in design, he certainly had a hand in creating many of America's seals. It's reported that in 1777, as a member of the Continental Congress, Hopkinson arranged the 13 stars on the flag to be in rows, reflecting the pattern we know today. He also used six-pointed stars, which contradicts the story of Betsy Ross.

In 1781, Hopkinson filed a dispute with the US government, in an attempt to get paid for his efforts. Requesting £2,700 for his labour, the Treasury formally rejected his request, based on the fact he was "not the only person" who had a hand in designing the flag. While Hopkinson might have seethed at this response, it is significant as it officially acknowledged his contribution. He was the only person to have claimed involvement with the flag at the time it was made, bolstering his claim to fame.


As well as being an artist, Hopkinson worked as a lawyer, musician, inventor and author


Ross presents the finished flag to George Washington, in this painting by John Ward Dunsmore

story with great pride. However, it invites readers to make their own judgement, to decide whether it is "historical fact or much-loved fiction".

However, in 2015, a new piece of evidence emerged that might vindicate the story of Betsy Ross. A curator at Mount Vernon (George Washington's estate) apparently dusted off an old receipt for bedsheets, from Washington to a 'John Ross' of Philadelphia. According to the records, there was only one John Ross living in Philadelphia at that time - Betsy's husband. If this is true, it proves Betsy knew Washington and had worked for him before, so is all the more likely to have made the flag.

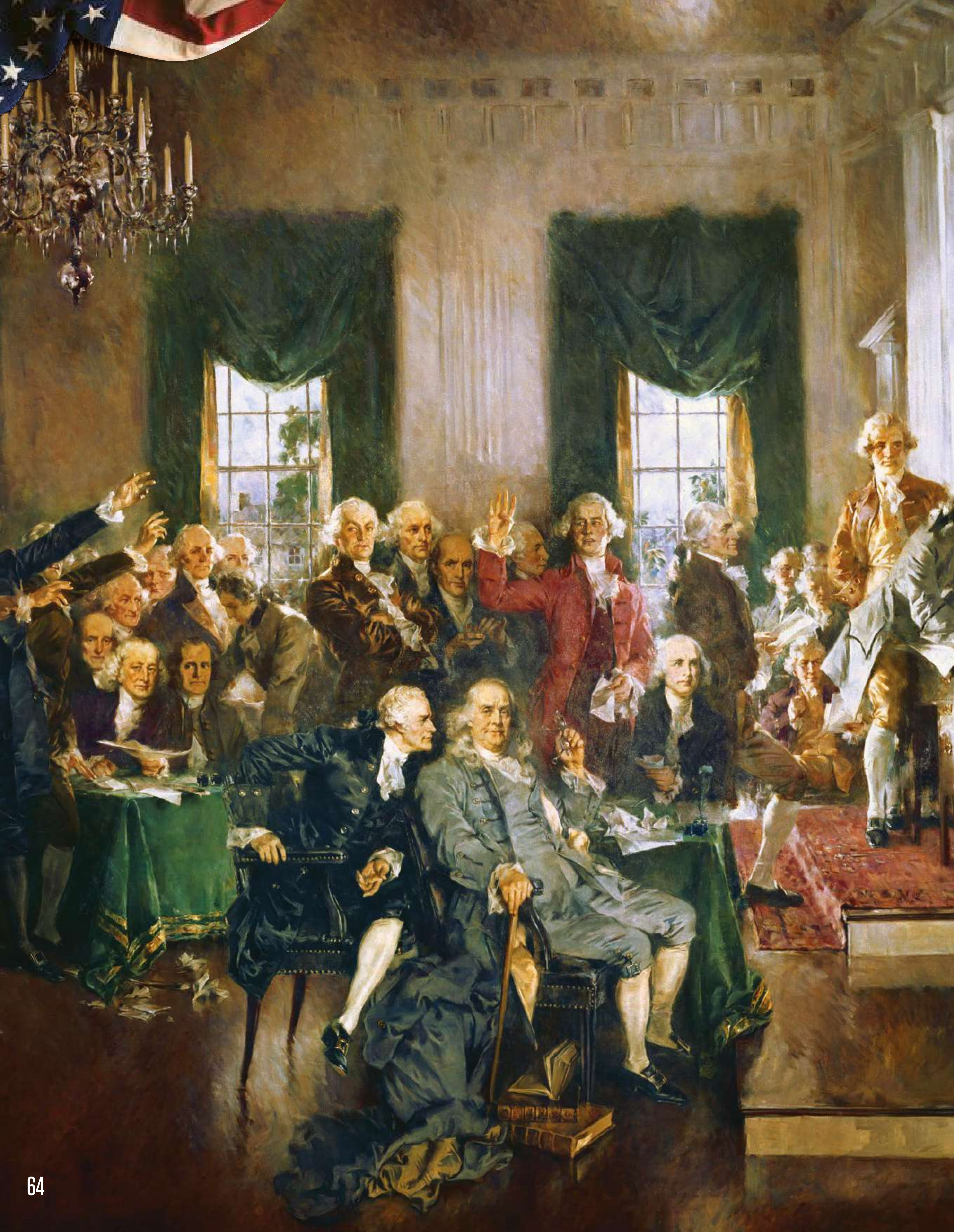
Despite her failing health and old age, after Betsy retired she still journeyed miles every week to attend Quaker services

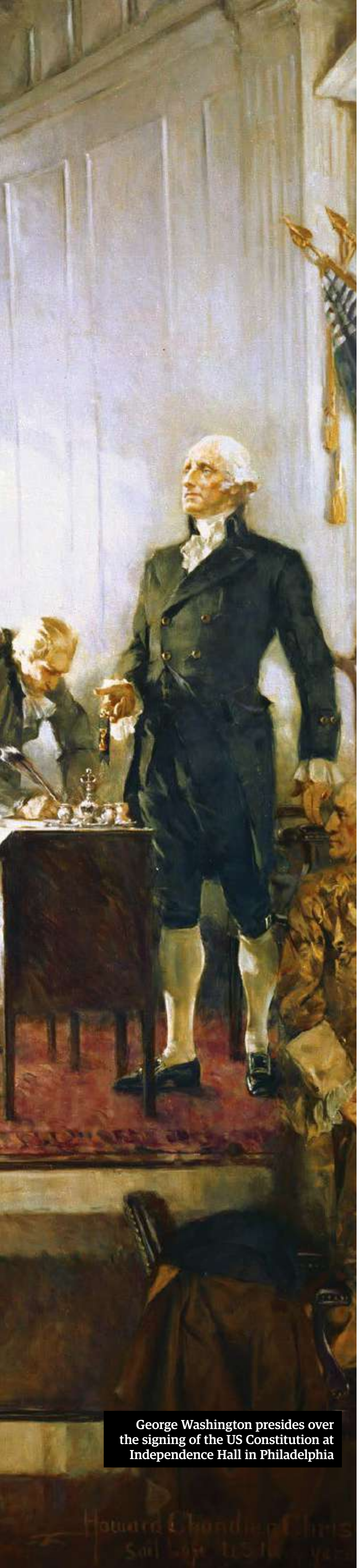
As for Betsy, we know that she lived a long and prosperous life. While continuing to run her upholstery shop, Betsy married twice more - first to a Joseph Ashburn, who was captured and imprisoned by the British, and lastly to John Claypoole. Claypoole could trace his ancestry back to one of the *Mayflower* passengers, and he and Betsy were married for almost half a century.

A decade before she died, she left her profitable Philadelphia business in the hands of her daughter, Clarissa, while Betsy moved out west to live out her retirement on the frontier. She died at the ripe old age of 84, unaware that a few decades later, she would become a true American legend.

Betsy's flag hangs alongside other historic American flags in Washington, DC

© Getty Images





George Washington presides over the signing of the US Constitution at Independence Hall in Philadelphia

September 1787

Supreme Law of the Land

The US Constitution moved well beyond its predecessor, the Articles of Confederation, in establishing a strong central government and defining the roles of its branches

When the Second Continental Congress convened at Independence Hall in Philadelphia on 10 May 1776, the former North American colonies were in open revolt against the British crown, and the prospects for victory against the world's most formidable military and political power remained doubtful at best.

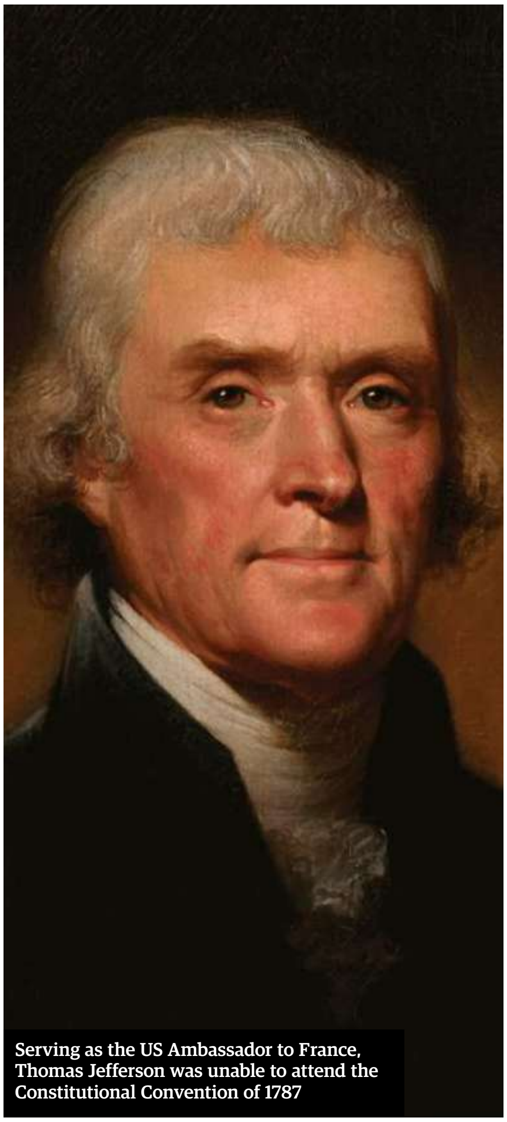
Nevertheless, the delegates from the 13 colonies understood that declaring and achieving independence were quite different from establishing a lasting, prosperous peace in the context of a functioning government that addressed all the varied dimensions of a viable entity – one nation. The development of a government that captured the vision of the Founding Fathers – those men who led the colonies during the revolution and then endeavoured to establish a governmental framework – was problematic. Although they had been bound by the common goal of achieving independence, each colony possessed its own agenda for the postwar peace and its own perspective on the role of government in the lives of the people. Such varied perspectives were further reflected in the political stances assumed by their representatives.

At the height of the Constitutional debate, Virginia's James Madison was a young man only in his mid-30s

On 12 June 1776, the Second Continental Congress took the first step toward forming a government that could survive the immediacy of war and eventually forge the United States of America into a cohesive country with the rights of the people and their myriad interests addressed.

Eight days after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, a 13-member committee led by Pennsylvanian John Dickinson began deliberations to produce a workable document defining the responsibilities and limits of a central government. Discussion focused on the sovereignty of each state, the responsibilities of a 'confederate' government, its structure, and procedural issues. After four weeks of meetings, the committee presented a draft of the Articles of Confederation to Congress.

Inherent in the Articles was the intent to limit the power of a central government since the current revolution was being fought to end the oppressive rule of a far-away legislative assembly and to throw off the yoke of a 'despotic' monarch. The Articles proposed the formation of a Congress with the authority to establish a common currency, settle boundary disputes, declare war and affect peace, and conduct relations with foreign powers. One of its cornerstones, however, asserted that



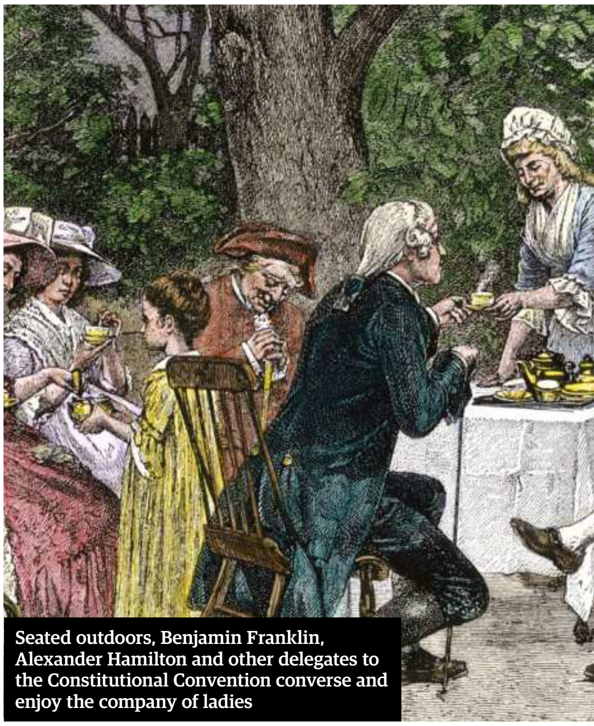
Serving as the US Ambassador to France, Thomas Jefferson was unable to attend the Constitutional Convention of 1787

those powers not specifically vested in such a Congress of limited authority were reserved for the states, as each should "retain its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right".

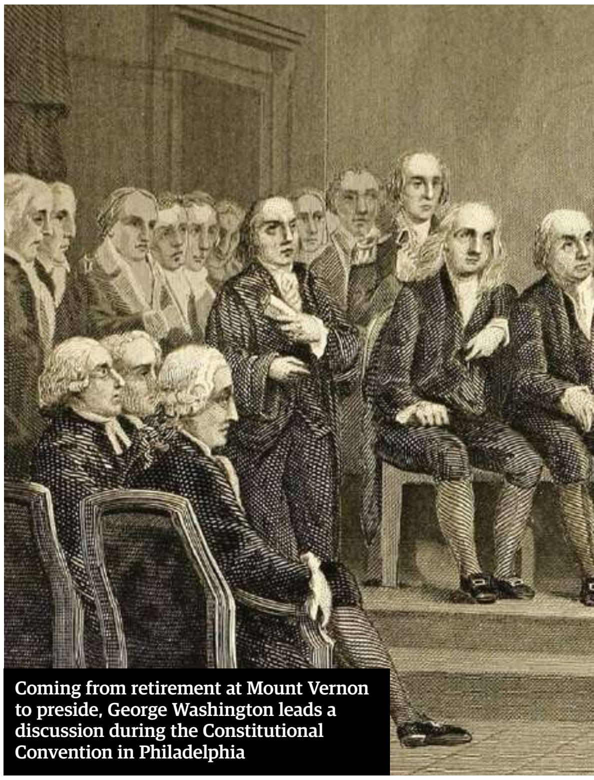
Congress was not empowered to levy or collect taxes, compel individual states to fund a central government or even impose its decisions on the states themselves. There were no provisions for a chief executive, or president, and no foundations for a comprehensive judicial branch. Congress debated for 16 months before the presentation of the Articles of Confederation to the individual colonies for ratification on 15 November 1777, with a deadline of 10 March 1778. The ensuing swirl of discourse was indicative of the arduous task that lay ahead as each colony stubbornly sought to protect its own interests.

Ratification required the approval of all 13 colonies. Virginia was first to approve and the only colony that met the 1778 deadline. Maryland was the last, its assembly holding out until 1 March 1781, three years later. The issue for Maryland, as well as the smaller colonies of Delaware and New Jersey, centred on the western land claims of the larger colonies. Maryland acceded to the terms of the Articles only after Virginia relinquished to Congress its claims to territory lying north of the Ohio River.

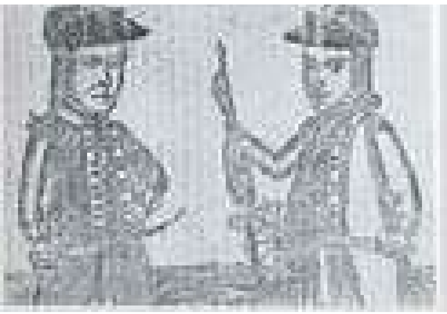
Even with the enactment of the Articles, other issues loomed. The document was exceptionally limited in scope, and concerns relating to procedure and pre-eminence remained. When issues came before Congress, smaller states wanted each of the 13 to have a single vote, while larger states asserted that their greater populations should be acknowledged in proportional votes. Since the states were nominally expected to provide funding



Seated outdoors, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton and other delegates to the Constitutional Convention converse and enjoy the company of ladies



Coming from retirement at Mount Vernon to preside, George Washington leads a discussion during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia



Defining moment

Shays' Rebellion begins 1786

Although farmers in states from the South to New England rise in protest against the enforcement of judgments from debt holders and attempts to collect taxes following a series of crop failures amid a difficult economy, Shays' Rebellion, led by Daniel Shays, is most intense in Massachusetts, where an attempt is made to seize the federal arsenal at Springfield and merchants are threatened with their lives. The Massachusetts militia puts down the rebellion during several pitched battles, but the conflict exposes weaknesses in the ability of the federal government to respond, prompting an initiative to revise or replace the Articles of Confederation.

Timeline

1777

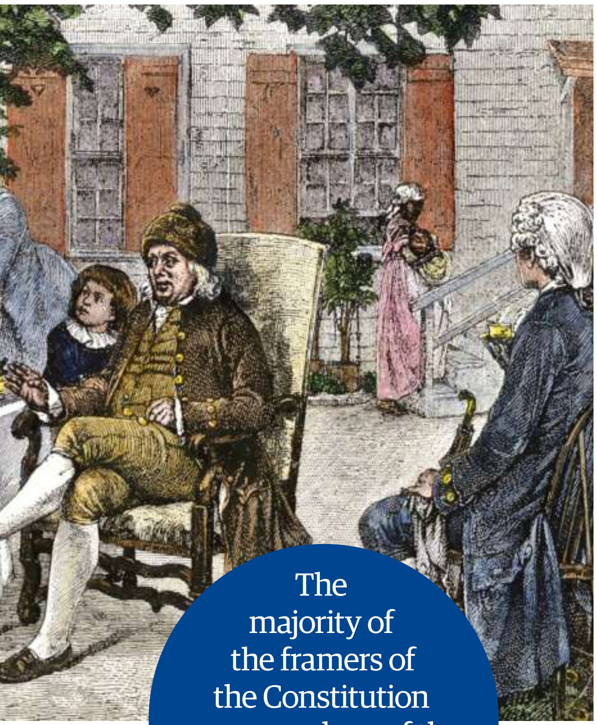
- **Articles of Confederation proposed**
  After months of discussion and debate, the Articles of Confederation, a relatively weak document, is presented by the Second Continental Congress to the state legislative bodies for their ratification.
  11 November 1777

- **Articles of Confederation ratified**
  With the approval of Maryland, which has held out for months, the Articles of Confederation are ratified by the individual states and become the rudimentary governing document of the new nation.
  1 March 1781

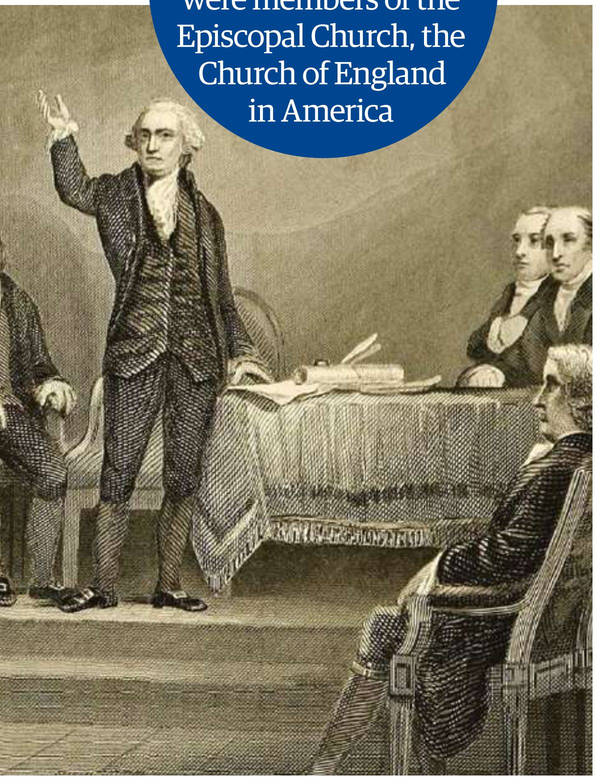
- **Treaty of Paris ends the revolution**
  With the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, the long American Revolution finally comes to an end. However, the last British troops do not leave the former colonies for another two months after.
  3 September 1783

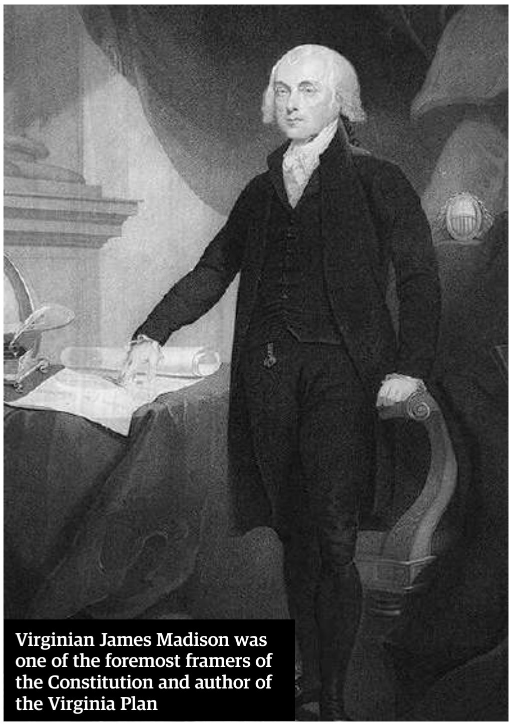
The Treaty of Paris in 1783 officially ended the American Revolution

- **Annapolis Convention Report**
  During a failed conference on the conditions of commerce in the United States, a group of delegates begin discussing the Articles of Confederation and deliver a report to Congress on their findings.
  14 September 1786



The majority of the framers of the Constitution were members of the Episcopal Church, the Church of England in America





Virginian James Madison was one of the foremost framers of the Constitution and author of the Virginia Plan

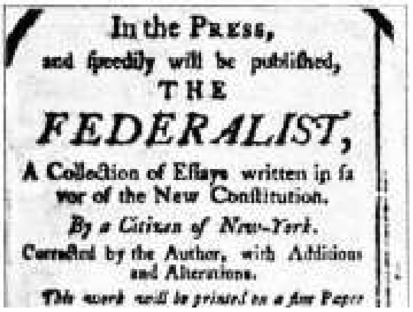
for the Congress to operate, Northern states wanted to count the slave populations in the Southern states when those expenses were allocated. In the end, each state received one vote, and the anticipated financial support was based on the size of a state's free population only.

While the Articles of Confederation assured that "each state retains its sovereignty," the business of government was handicapped from the beginning. For the next eight years the young nation's government was hobbled by the states' self-interests, its own inability to enact and enforce measures, and the notion that the states were indeed more of a loose collection of semi-autonomous entities rather than united.

Inevitably, circumstances arose that tested the efficacy of the Articles of Confederation. States printed their own currency and entered into negotiations with foreign powers. They also trampled the territorial claims of one another, argued over trade and continued to serve their singular interests. Meanwhile, in the wake of the revolution the population of the country swelled to more than four million, and it soon became imperative to craft a central government capable of serving and protecting a nation of great diversity in beliefs, world views and economic conditions.

In the summer of 1786, the shortcomings of the Articles of Confederation were laid bare, and the fledgling country found itself in crisis. The immediate impetus for the establishment of a strong federal government came with a rebellion of Massachusetts farmers under Daniel Shays. The farmers were disgruntled with their creditors and believed they were the victims of exploitation. By June 1787 the Massachusetts militia had quelled the uprising, but not without an appeal from General Benjamin Lincoln to Boston area merchants to finance the cost of the military operations. The central government had been powerless to raise an army to meet the threat, which might have spread to other states, or to otherwise intervene in the perilous circumstances that followed. In many cases the approval of nine states was required for action, and sometimes all 13 had to agree.

Clearly, another such rebellion might actually cause the vulnerable national government to collapse. Chaos would likely ensue as each state charted its own course, negotiating with foreign powers, erecting tariffs and other economic barriers, and possibly even taking up arms against one another. Frontier regions would be subject



In the PRESS,
and ſpeedily will be publiſhed,
THE
FEDERALIST,
A Collection of Eſſays written in favor of the New Conſtitution.
By a Citizen of New-York.
Corrected by the Author, with Additions and Alterations.
This work will be printed on a fine Paper

Defining moment

First Federalist Papers published

1787

Authored by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay under the pseudonym 'Publius', the *Federalist Papers* are intended to raise popular support for the new Constitution to replace the outmoded Articles of Confederation and for a more powerful and effective federal government. These essays on the role of government are rapidly written and appear in three New York newspapers: the *Daily Advertiser*, *New-York Packet* and *Independent Journal*. Immensely popular, they exert great influence on public opinion during a critical time in the formation of the governmental structure of the US.

- **Congress calls for delegates**
  Recognising the inadequacy of the Articles of Confederation, the Confederation Congress issues a call for delegates from each state to meet in Philadelphia to discuss a revised form of government.
  21 February 1787

- **Postponement for a quorum**
  On the appointed date for the beginning of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia only the delegations of Pennsylvania and Virginia are present, forcing a postponement of the event for 11 days.
  14 May 1787

- **Constitutional Convention convenes**
  Although only 55 of the expected 74 state delegates actually attend the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia at any given time, the proceedings begin with the objective of developing a governmental document.
  25 May 1787

- **Final draft debated**
  The final draft of the Constitution is debated on the convention floor and later sent to the Confederation Congress for approval and distribution to the individual states for ratification.
  17 September 1787

Discussions take place during the Constitutional Convention in 1787

© Alamy

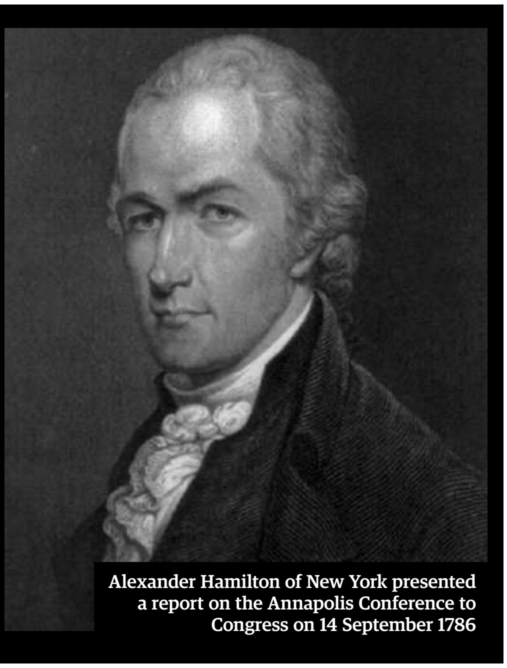
The Annapolis Conference

Concerned with the regulation of trade and commerce among the states and aware that the weak central government, its authority limited under the Articles of Confederation, had little power to bring about needed regulation, the state of Virginia called a conference at Annapolis in the autumn of 1786. The conference was scheduled at the request of James Madison, who hoped to discuss other issues as well.

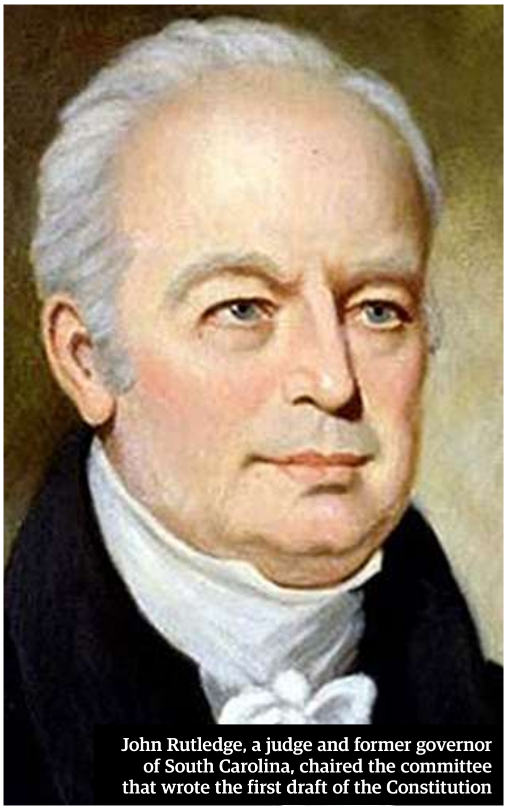
Madison was disappointed, however, when only five of the 13 states (Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware) sent delegations, and only three of these (Virginia, New Jersey and Delaware) had enough representation to transact business in the name of their governments. Those who travelled to Annapolis were unable to function in any official manner, so they began a discourse on a broad range of topics dealing with the state of government. Among them were George Read, Alexander Hamilton and Edmund Randolph.

The group discovered that each was dissatisfied with the structure and function of the existing government under the auspices of the Articles of Confederation. They agreed that another conference should be scheduled to meet in Philadelphia the following summer to discuss improvements in the government in general.

Hamilton wrote a report of the discussions and presented it to the Confederation Congress on 14 September 1786. It suggested that the meeting should "...devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the constitution of the Federal Government adequate to the exigencies of the Union". Eight months later, the Constitutional Convention began.



Alexander Hamilton of New York presented a report on the Annapolis Conference to Congress on 14 September 1786

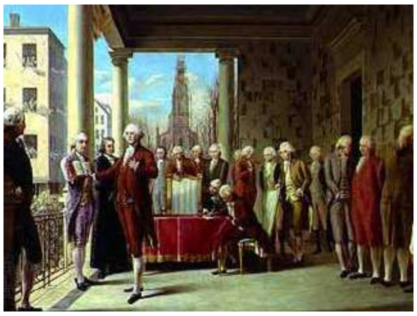


John Rutledge, a judge and former governor of South Carolina, chaired the committee that wrote the first draft of the Constitution

to foreign exploitation or even annexation. Word spread that a disaffected political faction in New York had reached out to the government of Canada for support, while the British were known to have incited Native American insurrections against settlers in the South.

Amid the spectre of anarchy, American political leaders recognised the necessity of a strong federal government empowered to act in the best interests of the United States collectively while preserving the rights of individual states where reasonable. By 1786, Virginian James Madison had openly wondered whether the Articles of Confederation could be called a basis for government at all. He was joined in his concerns by a venerated group of statesmen, who had staked their lives and fortunes on the cause of independence a decade earlier, including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and others. They agreed that a strong central government was a prerequisite to the survival of the United States, its status among the nations of the world, and its future prosperity.

Madison urged Washington to join the movement toward a constitutional convention, and in response the hero of the revolution and former commander of the Continental Army wrote from his Virginia home at Mount Vernon, "Let prejudices, unreasonable jealousies, and local interest yield to reason and liberality. Let us look to our National



Defining moment

George Washington becomes president 1789

Within weeks of the effective date of the Constitution, George Washington is sworn in as the first president of the United States on the balcony of Federal Hall in New York City after being elected during voting by the Electoral College (John Adams had already been selected as the first vice president). Following the ceremony, Washington and other government officials attend a worship service at St Paul's Chapel. During his inaugural address he tells the gathering, "...No event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order."

Delaware ratifies the Constitution
Afterward billing itself as the 'First State', Delaware is indeed the first of the former colonies to ratify the new Constitution. The vote among its delegates is unanimous: 30-0.
7 December 1787

The Constitution is ratified
With an affirmative vote in New Hampshire, nine states have ratified the new Constitution, enough to make the document the new law of the land, replacing the Articles of Confederation.
21 June 1788

The Constitution takes effect
The Constitution, a document that survives in modified form to this day as the supreme law of the United States, takes effect with measures that strengthen the power of the federal government.
4 March 1789

The First Congress met in New York, then the capital of the United States

Rhode Island ratifies the Constitution
More than a year after the Constitution becomes law and George Washington is sworn in as the first president of the United States, Rhode Island is the last state to ratify the Constitution.
29 May 1790

Rhode Island became the 13th state to ratify the Constitution character, and to things beyond the present period. No Morn ever dawned more favourable than ours did – and no day was ever more clouded than the present! Wisdom, & good examples are necessary at this time to rescue the political machine from the impending storm... Thirteen Sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas a liberal, and energetic Constitution, well guarded & closely watched, to prevent incroachments [sic], might restore us to that degree of respectability & consequence, to which we had a fair claim....”

Eleven years prior to the Constitutional Convention, Independence Hall had been the scene of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

On 21 February 1787, the Confederation Congress issued a call for state delegates to meet in Philadelphia to consider a revised form of government. While Jefferson had served as principal author of the Declaration of Independence, he was unable to attend the convention, serving overseas as the young nation's ambassador to France. On 30 August 1787, he wrote to fellow Patriot John Adams expressing frustration at the slow progress of the convention but praising the men so dedicated to the proposition before them.

“I have news from America as late as July 19,” Jefferson noted. “Nothing had then transpired from the Federal convention. I am sorry they began their deliberations by so abominable a precedent as that of tying up the tongues of their members. Nothing can justify this example but the innocence of their intentions, and ignorance of the value of public discussions. I have no doubt that all their other measures will be good and wise. It is really an assembly of demigods.”

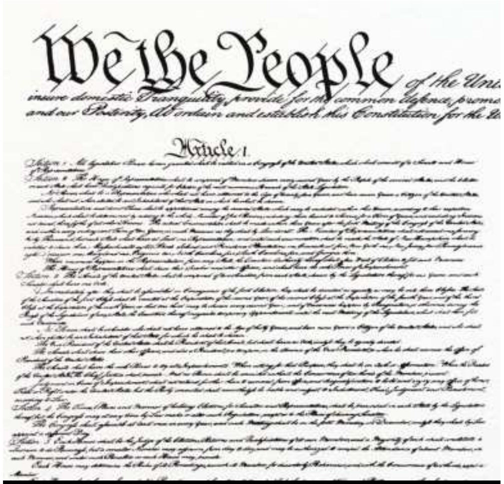
Jefferson, advanced in age, was revered as the envoy to France during the critical period of the revolution and a member of the Committee of Five that had drafted the Declaration. Madison, Hamilton and Jay were to later write the Federalist Papers, which espoused the theory and principles of a new constitution, while Hamilton is remembered today as the originator of the Federalist Party and architect of the nation's monetary system. Madison possessed tremendous knowledge of varied forms of government and the lessons of history. Although he demurred when called the ‘Father of the Constitution’, he also understood the necessity of maintaining states' rights in the context of a federal government.

Washington, who had relished retirement at Mount Vernon, heeded his country's call once again and journeyed to Philadelphia to preside over the convention. Making his perspective clear, he commented, “We are either a united people under one head, for Federal purposes, or we are 13 independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other.”

The Constitutional Convention was slated to begin on 14 May 1787; however, on that date a quorum (minimum number) from the 74 chosen delegates had failed to reach Philadelphia. The proceedings were postponed for 11 days, and 55 representatives of 12 states eventually participated. Rhode Island declined to join the effort. Fundamentally, though their differences were tremendous, the delegates agreed almost unanimously that a functioning central government had to become a reality with its firm footing lucidly presented in a new constitution.

Just prior to the Constitutional Convention, Madison wrote a detailed letter to Washington, the chairman of the Virginia delegation, describing the current political situation. He noted that, among other transgressions, the states had “failed to comply with Constitutional requisitions; encroached on federal authority; violated treaties; and enacted laws that were unjust.” On 16 April 1787, he wrote to Washington, “I have sought for middle ground, which may at once support a due supremacy of the national authority, and not exclude the local authorities wherever they can be useful.”

The Assembly Room in Independence Hall was the location of much debate during the framing of the US Constitution


We the People of the Uni

insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promo

and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the U

Article 1.

The preamble to the Constitution leads with the phrase, “We the People...” in bold script on the first page

Madison's bold statement was accompanied by action. While awaiting a quorum, he led other members of his delegation in drafting the Virginia Plan, which proposed a legislative branch of government with two houses within its framework, the representatives of the lower house subject to recall and rotation in office. States with larger populations, including Virginia, would seat a larger proportional number of representatives in both houses than the others. Fellow delegate Edmund Randolph introduced the Virginia Plan early in the proceedings, and on 31 May 1787, the convention began considering its provisions. In response to the Virginia Plan, the smaller states objected, and the New Jersey Plan, proposed chiefly by New Jersey delegate William Paterson, advocated one legislative vote per state on the basis of each state's

“We are either a united people under one head, or we are 13 independent sovereignties counteracting each other”

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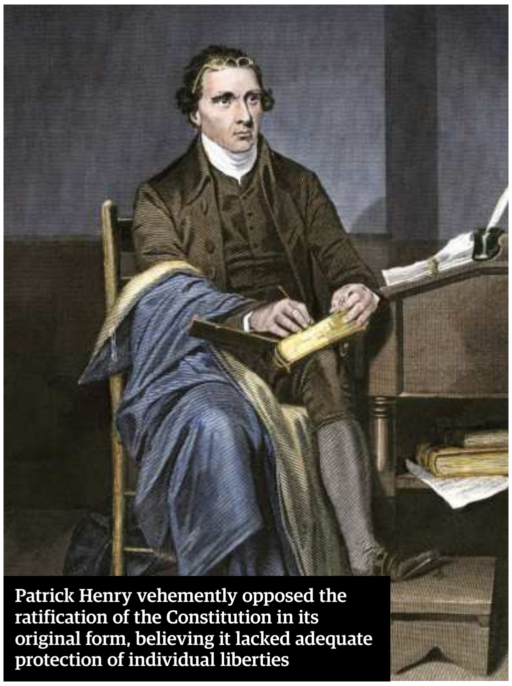
independence and involvement in the United States on a purely voluntary basis.

For 2-16 July the 'Committee of Eleven' worked to hammer out a plan incorporating both perspectives. While they agreed that the republican form of government with representatives elected by the people was proper, the committee wrestled with the methodology for those representatives to be allocated to Congress from each state. Mutually, the large states and small states feared that the other would gain pre-eminence and that their interests might be damaged.

Connecticut delegates Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth proposed a solution to the dilemma, and its brilliance is obvious. The Connecticut Compromise offered a bicameral legislature, a House of Representatives elected on the basis of population and a Senate with equal representation from each state. Additionally, any legislation related to finances or revenue would originate in the House of Representatives.



Patrick Henry vehemently opposed the ratification of the Constitution in its original form, believing it lacked adequate protection of individual liberties

In addition to the establishment of a legislative branch of government, the delegates further endorsed an office of president, the executive branch, and determined that it should be occupied by an individual rather than composed of a committee. Finer points related to the president's authority, term in office and method of election, and other concerns were also decided in due course. A judicial branch was established with the charge of interpreting the laws of the land. Still, other debates persisted, including a discussion surrounding the institution of slavery and its impact on a particular state's census, foreign relations, trade and other issues. In time, the executive and legislative branches of government would mature to achieve a system of checks and balances, ensuring that no single branch would dominate the other two in conducting the affairs of state, and such a balance of power survives to this day.

During the 1780s, Virginia was the most populous of the former British colonies and claimed immense territory to the west and northwest

While there was much still to be accomplished, the Connecticut Compromise was an icebreaker, facilitating other agreements as the formation of the Constitution surged ahead. By 24 July, the 'Committee of Detail' had been commissioned to draft the Constitution on the basis of the resolutions that had been approved. Edmund Randolph of Virginia, Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, John Rutledge of South Carolina and Nathaniel Gorham of Massachusetts produced a document consisting of a preamble and 23 articles by early August.

On 8 September, the 'Committee of Style and Arrangement' was organised to produce a final draft of the Constitution. Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania, Rufus King of Massachusetts, William Samuel Johnson of Connecticut, Hamilton of New York and Madison of Virginia distilled the final version to seven articles and a preamble and brought the document to the convention floor four days later. Discussions began on 17 September, and some delegates walked out of the proceedings. Three others, disappointed with certain aspects of it, remained but refused to sign. Eventually, 39 did put pen to paper.

The elderly Benjamin Franklin was supportive but less than enthusiastic. He offered, "There are several parts of this Constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them." He added that he would sign in acknowledgement of the momentous importance of progress "because I expect no better and because I am not sure that it is not the best".

Before the proposed Constitution was placed in the hands of the states for debate and hoped-for ratification, it was presented to the Confederation Congress in New York City, which approved its advance on 28 September after several days of discussion. States were notified to hold elections to seat delegates at a federal convention. The approval of nine states was required to place the Constitution in full force and effect.

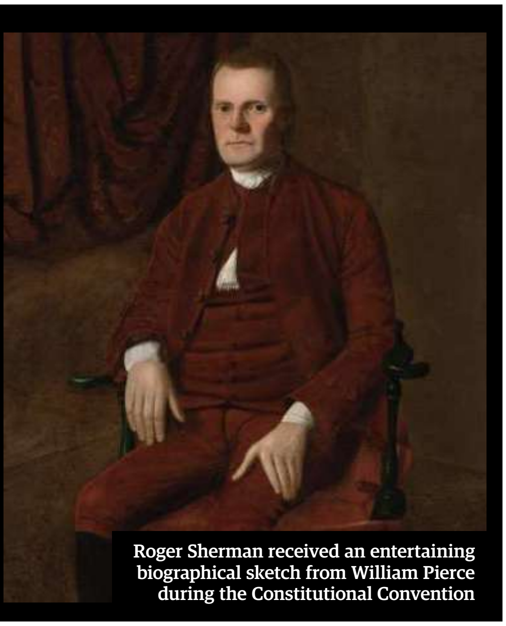
The publication of the document was polarising. Taking up the pen name 'Publius', Hamilton, Jay and Madison wrote the *Federalist Papers* to endorse the acceptance of the Constitution in New York and subsequently across the states. Opposition was vocal. In Virginia, Patriot firebrand Patrick Henry, whose well-reasoned pamphlet *Common Sense* and passionate, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" speech had been instrumental in promoting

Sizing up the delegates

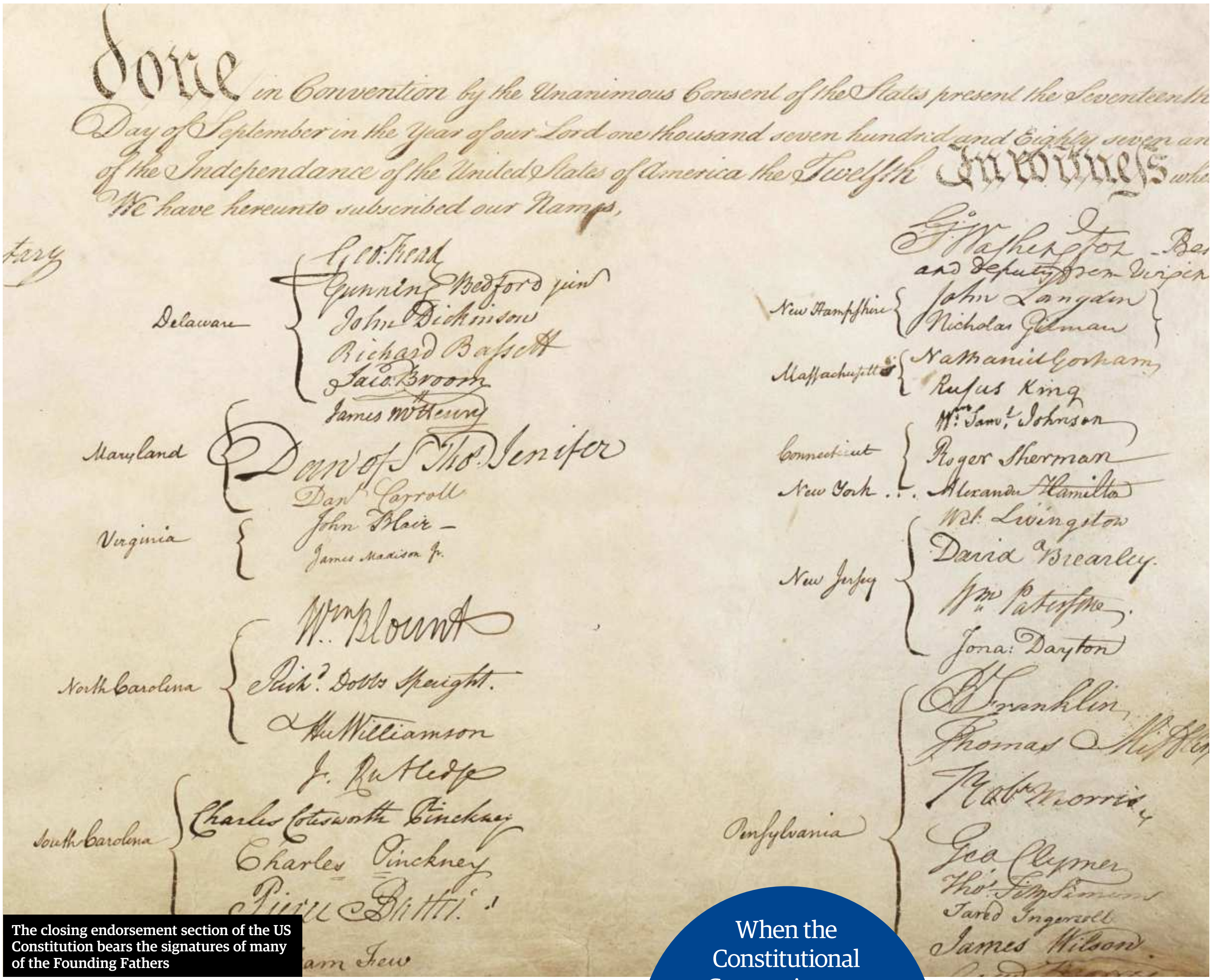
William Pierce, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention from Georgia, is one of the lesser-known lawmakers who participated before leaving the proceedings prior to their conclusion due to business reasons. Perhaps his greatest contribution lay in the descriptions of the other delegates he wrote after becoming acquainted with them in the course of the convention. Pierce kept his writings to himself, and his observations were not published until 1828 in the *Savannah Georgian* newspaper.

Through Pierce's descriptions modern historians can gain a glimpse into the conduct of those who attended. He called James Madison "a character who has long been in public life; and what is very remarkable every Person seems to acknowledge his greatness. He blends together the profound politician, with the Scholar. In the management of every great question he evidently took the lead in the Convention, and tho' he cannot be called an Orator, he is a most agreeable, eloquent, and convincing Speaker."

Roger Sherman received a rather comical appraisal: "Mr. Sherman," Pierce wrote, "exhibits the oddest shaped character I ever remember to have met. He is awkward, unmeaning, and unaccountably strange. But in his train of thinking there is something regular, deep and comprehensive; yet the oddity of his address, the vulgarisms that accompany his public speaking, and that strange New England cant which runs through his public as well as his private speaking make everything connected with him grotesque and laughable – yet he deserves infinite praise...."



Roger Sherman received an entertaining biographical sketch from William Pierce during the Constitutional Convention



done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven an of the Independance of the United States of America the Twelfth In witness wh We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

tary

Go: Washington — Pre and deputy from Virgin

Delaware: Geo: Read, Gunning Bedford jun, John Dickinson, Richard Bassett, Jaco: Broom

Maryland: James McHenry, Dan of St Thos. Jenifer, Danl Carroll

Virginia: John Blair —, James Madison Jr.

North Carolina: Wm Blount, Richd. Dobbs Spaight., Hu Williamson

South Carolina: J. Rutledge, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney, Pierce Butler.

am Few

New Hampshire: John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman

Maſsachuſetts: Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King

Connecticut: Wm. Saml. Johnson, Roger Sherman

New York: Alexander Hamilton

New Jersey: Wil: Livingston, David Brearley, Wm. Paterson, Jona: Dayton

Pensylvania: B Franklin, Thomas Miffl, Robt Morris, Geo. Clymer, Thos. FitzSimons, Jared Ingersoll, James Wilson.

The closing endorsement section of the US Constitution bears the signatures of many of the Founding Fathers

colonial fervour, had refused an appointment to serve as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention and railed against the document, proclaiming that he had "smelt a rat in Philadelphia tending toward the monarchy!"

Henry believed that a conspiracy to deprive the people of their hard-won freedom was afoot and warned, "Show me the age and country where the rights and liberties of the people were placed on the sole chance of their rulers being good men without a consequent loss of liberty! I say that the loss of that dearest privilege has ever followed, with absolute certainty, every such mad attempt!"

On 7 December, Delaware became the first state to ratify the Constitution. Pennsylvania followed five days later, and New Jersey on 18 December. Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland and South Carolina had agreed by May 1788, and on 21 June, New Hampshire became the ninth state to approve. The Constitution was officially ratified. Massachusetts had withheld its assent amid concerns that basic individual freedoms had not been specifically protected by the document but moved forward after assurances that amendments would be forthcoming.

New York had been a hotbed of anti-Federalist sentiment, as had Virginia. These two states, however, followed suit in mid 1788. Madison was again instrumental in the Virginia decision, persuading the divided delegation to set aside their concerns and vote for ratification.

North Carolina approved in late 1789, and Rhode Island became the last state to ratify the Constitution on 29 May 1790. George Washington had taken the oath as the first president of the United States the previous April.

When the Constitutional Convention put its product to a vote, Alexander Hamilton was the only remaining delegate from New York

For more than 200 years the US Constitution has robustly stood the test of time. While its provisions remain open to interpretation, it has proven remarkably resilient amid changing circumstances, its preamble noting that its power is derived from the consent of the governed with its opening phrase, "We the People…."

Amended on 27 occasions to date, including the Bill of Rights, which fulfilled the promise of installing safeguards for individual liberties, and most recently in 1992, when an amendment concerning Congressional salaries was ratified 202 years after its submission, the Constitution remains a living document, a marvel of prose, persuasion and precedent. While it is perhaps flawed, it offers a standard by which other governments have since patterned their own structure.

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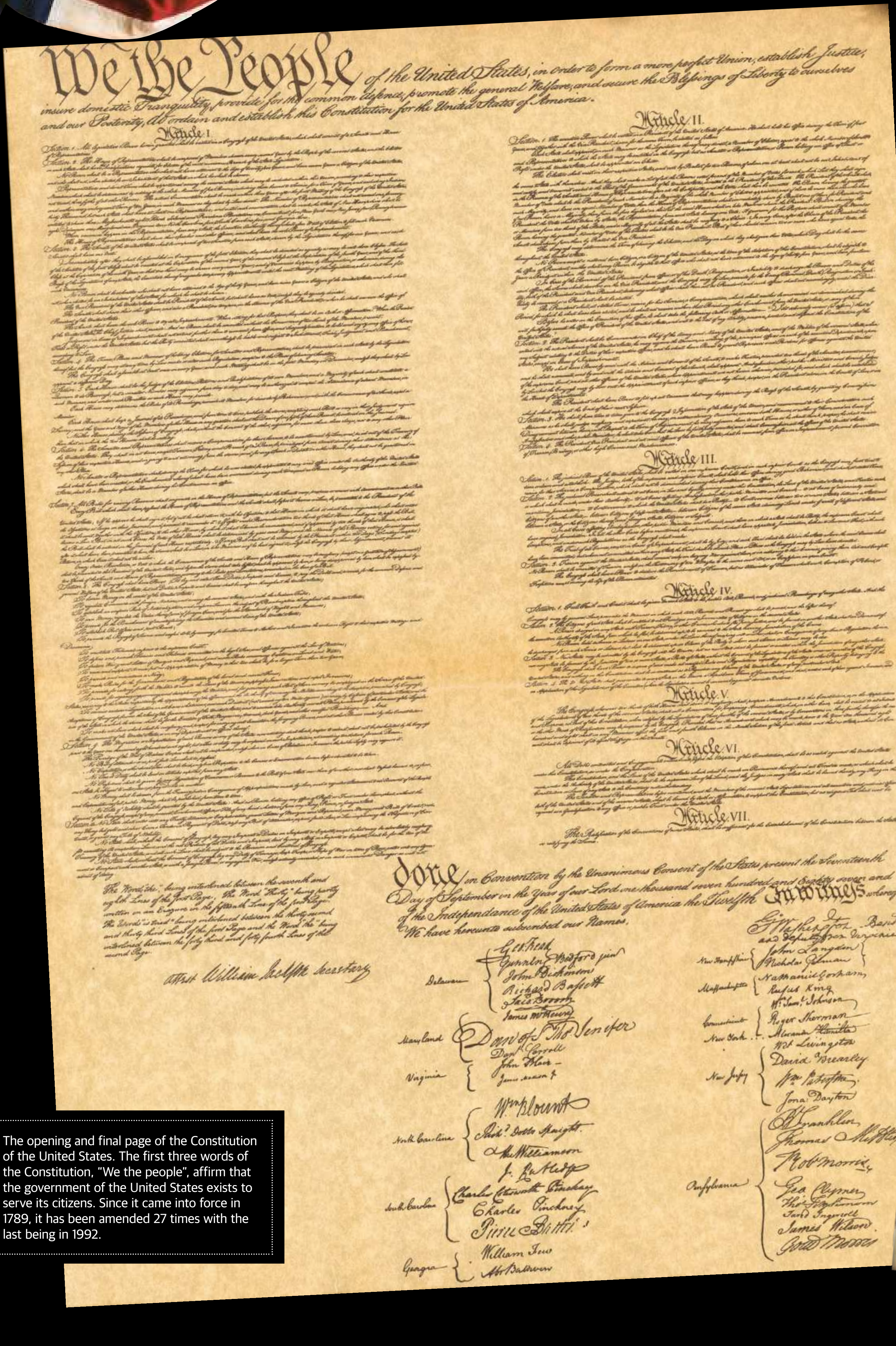


We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Bleſsings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article. I.

Article. II.

Article. III.

Article. IV.

Article. V.

Article. VI.

Article. VII.

The Word, "the," being interlined between the seventh and eighth Lines of the first Page, The Word "Thirty" being partly written on an Erazure in the fifteenth Line of the first Page. The Words "is tried" being interlined between the thirty second and thirty third Lines of the first Page and the Word "the" being interlined between the forty third and forty fourth Lines of the second Page.

Attest William Jackson Secretary

done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independance of the United States of America the Twelfth In witneſs whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

Go: Washington — Presidt. and deputy from Virginia

Delaware { Geo: Read, Gunning Bedford jun, John Dickinson, Richard Baſsett, Jaco: Broom

Maryland { James McHenry, Dan of St Thos Jenifer, Danl Carroll

Virginia { John Blair —, James Madison Jr.

North Carolina { Wm Blount, Richd Dobbs Spaight., Hu Williamson

South Carolina { J. Rutledge, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney, Pierce Butler.

Georgia { William Few, Abr Baldwin

New Hampshire { John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman

Maſsachusetts { Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King

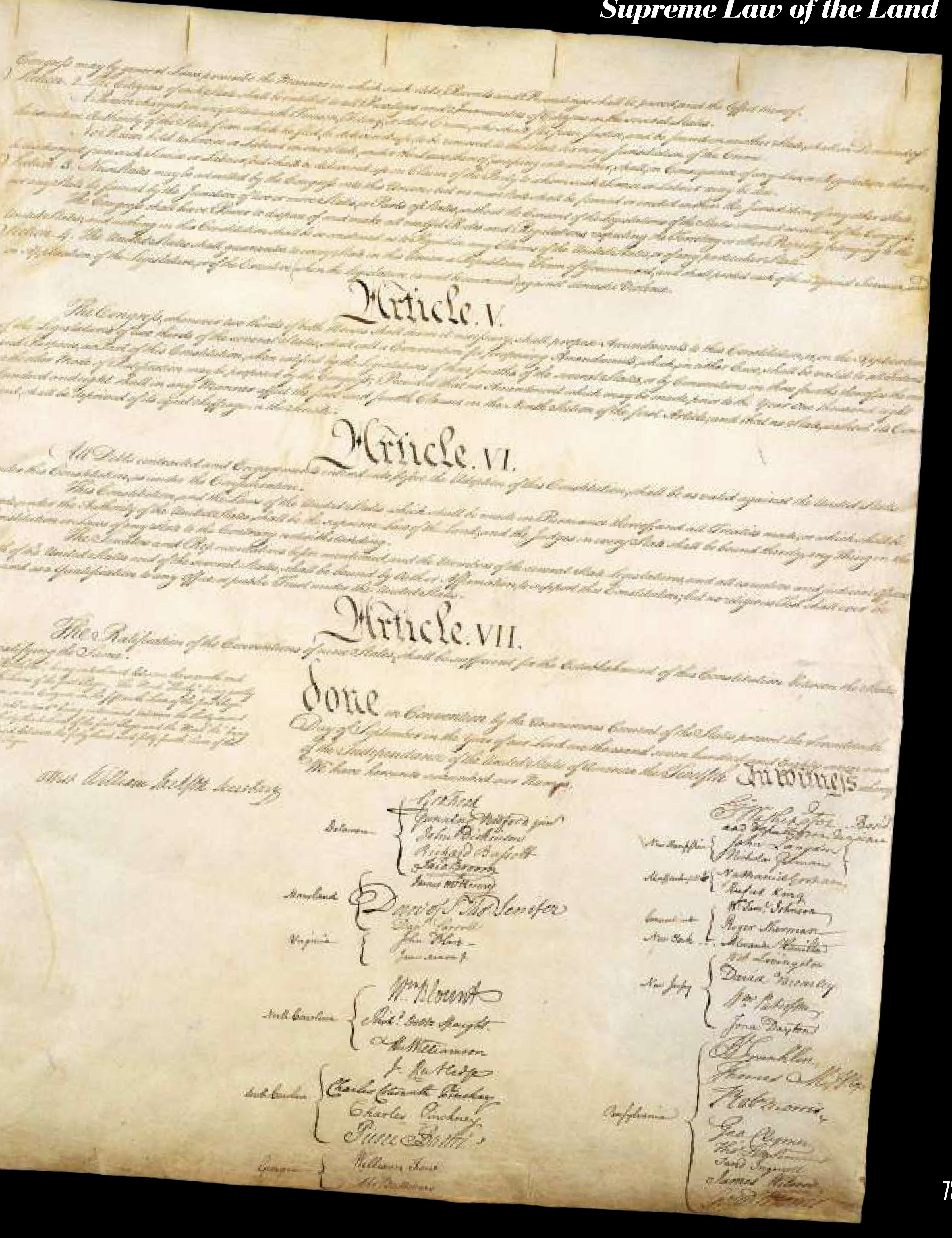
Connecticut { Wm Saml Johnson, Roger Sherman

New York . . . Alexander Hamilton

New Jersey { Wil: Livingston, David Brearley, Wm Paterson, Jona: Dayton

Pensylvania { B Franklin, Thomas Mifflin, Robt Morris, Geo. Clymer, Thos FitzSimons, Jared Ingersoll, James Wilson, Gouv Morris

The opening and final page of the Constitution of the United States. The first three words of the Constitution, "We the people", affirm that the government of the United States exists to serve its citizens. Since it came into force in 1789, it has been amended 27 times with the last being in 1992.



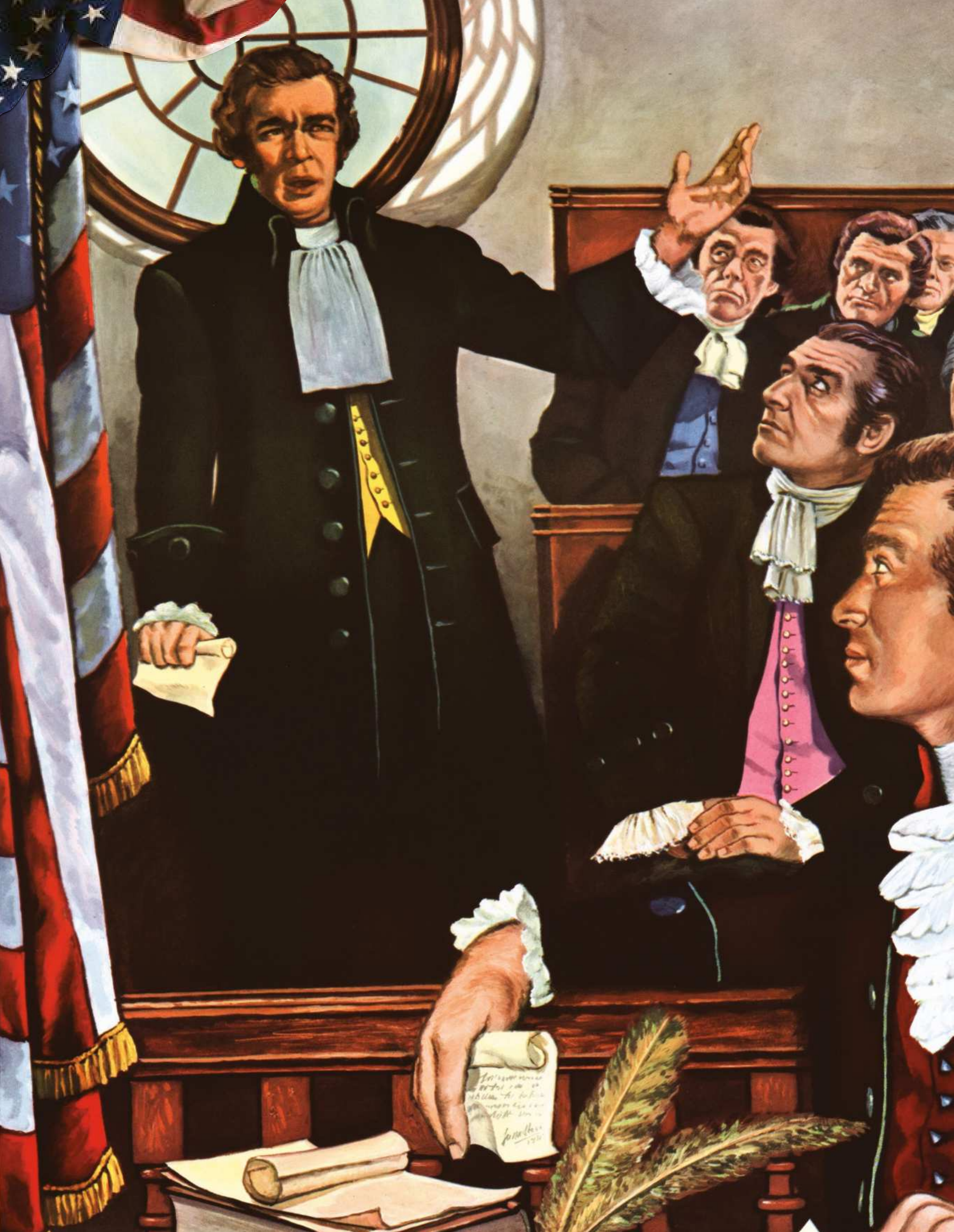
Article. V.

Article. VI.

Article. VII.

done

In Witness



This illustration of trial by jury includes an admonition that the citizenry is responsible for safeguarding the Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the US Constitution, brought guarantees of individual liberties to the law of the land

Even before the ratification of the US Constitution, some of the Founding Fathers groused. Their concerns for the protection of individual liberties seemed to have been discounted in the crafting of the document that could, they believed, substitute one tyranny - that of the British Crown - for another, a federal government whose powers amounted to overreach into the daily lives of the people.

It was a circumstance that the group known as the anti-Federalists could not bear. Only after assurances were made by prominent framers of the Constitution, Virginia's James Madison chief among them, did divided assemblies assent to the passage of the new framework for the government of a united country. Although he personally believed that further delineation of individual rights was not necessary, to allay any fears Madison pledged that a 'Bill of Rights' would follow in the wake of the Constitution's ratification.

James Madison wrote to Jefferson in October 1788 to say that he didn't view the lack of a Bill of Rights as a "material defect"

Fellow Virginian George Mason had already commented that he "wished the plan had been prefaced by a Bill of Rights". Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was also among those who believed the Constitution stopped short of the guarantees it should provide. "A Bill of Rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth," he wrote. Yet another Virginian, Patrick Henry, was firmly against the Constitution without safeguards for individual liberties. Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts laid out his reservations in a pamphlet titled *Hon. Mr. Gerry's Objections*, which was widely circulated with 46 printings.

Federalists, on the other hand, believed that personal liberties were sufficiently protected. Madison and Alexander Hamilton used the platform of the *Federalist Papers* to assert that the states' protection was sufficient and that ratification of the Constitution did not mean the American people were giving up any of their personal rights or freedoms.

On the floor of the Constitutional Convention, Madison had suggested the addition of a Bill of Rights to the Constitution and Gerry had offered a motion to make it happen, but it was defeated following a brief debate. Still, as the state assemblies wrestled with the ratification issue, it became more apparent to the Federalists that a subsequent Bill of Rights was a necessity to achieve ratification of the Constitution itself.

Although Madison personally considered the drafting of the Bill of Rights a "nauseous project," he set about the task during the term of the first Constitutional Congress. While some members of Congress looked on with indifference and the anti-Federalists tried to hold out, forcing a second Constitutional Convention that might succeed in curbing federal authority even further, Madison ploughed ahead, introducing nine amendments to the House of Representatives on 8 June 1789. By late September the House and Senate had approved a slate of 12 amendments requiring the approval of three-quarters of the states. Ten amendments were ratified, with Virginia's deciding affirmative vote cast on 15 December 1791. Two that concerned compensation of elected officials and the number of representatives were not approved.

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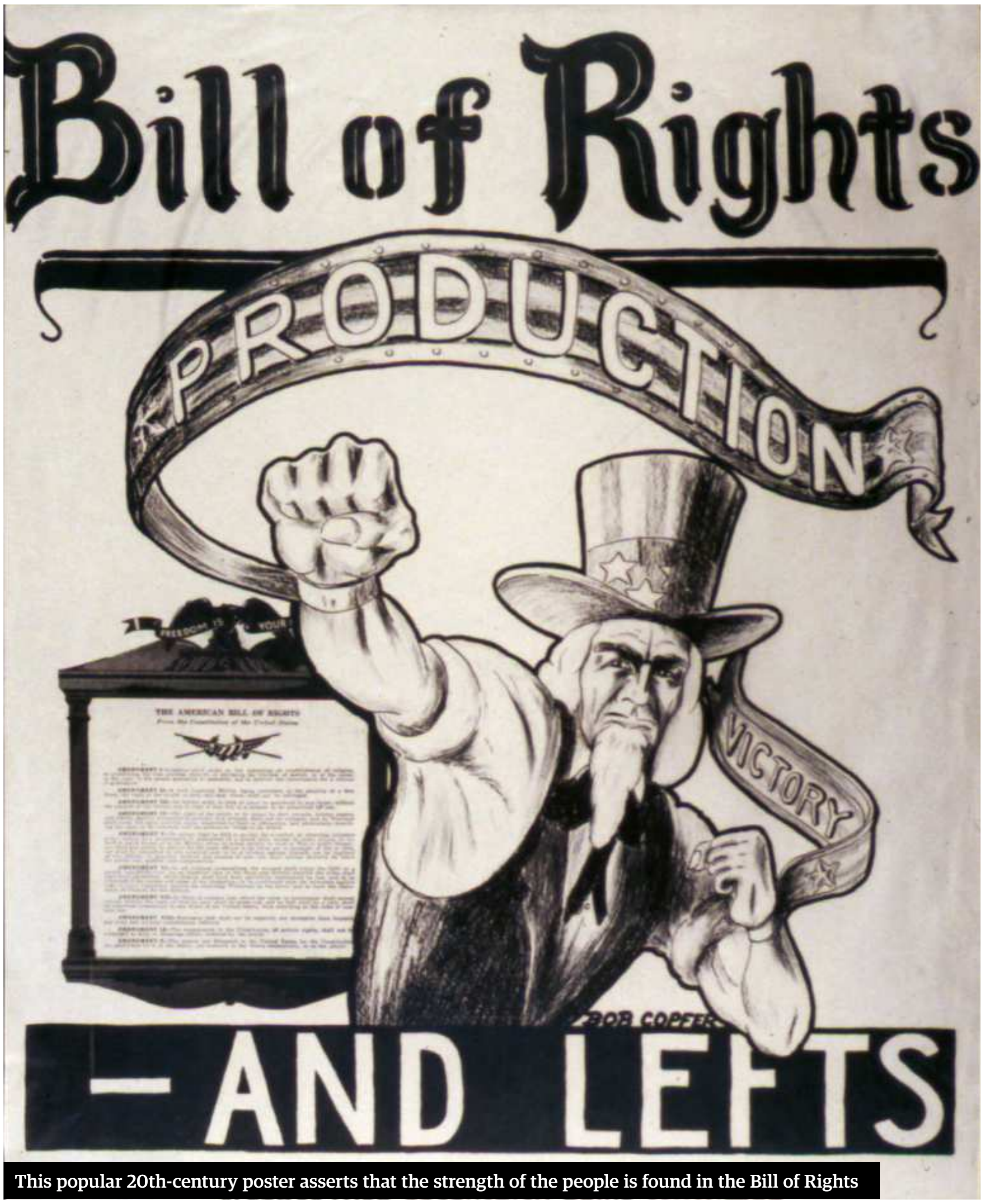

Bill of Rights
PRODUCTION
FREEDOM IS YOUR
THE AMERICAN BILL OF RIGHTS
VICTORY
BOB COPFER
– AND LEFTS

This popular 20th-century poster asserts that the strength of the people is found in the Bill of Rights

The first ten amendments to the US Constitution, popularly known as the Bill of Rights, affirmed basic individual rights and liberties in the document that continues in modified form to this day as the law of the land. Each of these embodied the lessons of historical documents, the recent revolutionary experience and the preservation of state autonomy to the extent possible.

The first amendment protects freedom of speech and freedom of religion, as well as the right of the people to "peaceably" assemble and to petition the government for the "redress of grievances". The second amendment references the roots of the armed insurrection that won the war for independence as a citizen army, or militia that confronted the might of the British military. It reads, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The third amendment speaks directly to the odious Quartering Act of 1765 that had required citizens to provide room and board for British soldiers in private homes during peacetime without the consent of the property owner. "No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law," it asserts.

The fourth amendment protects individuals from the unlawful search or seizure of property, requiring probable cause. "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized," it states.

The fifth amendment, perhaps most familiar to many, requires a grand jury to issue criminal indictments, due process of law for those charged with crimes, and the prohibition of double jeopardy - trying an individual for a crime more than once

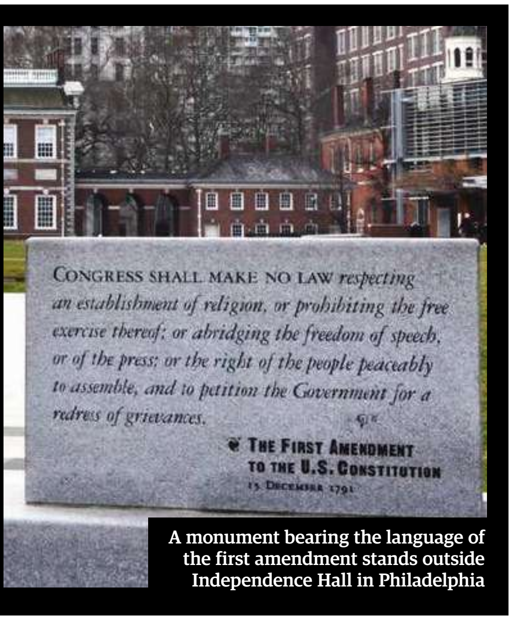
The state of the States

James Madison originally proposed changes to the preamble of the Constitution and that additional changes be made to the document itself. However, alterations resulted in his Articles 3 to 12 being added at the end of the Constitution instead.

On 20 November 1789, New Jersey was the first state to ratify any of the amendments, and Virginia's ratification in December 1791 provided the required number of endorsements. On 18 January 1792, President George Washington informed Congress that three-quarters of the 14 states, following the admission of Vermont to the Union the previous year, had ratified the ten measures that became Amendments 1–10 to the Constitution, collectively termed the Bill of Rights.

Still, the ratification of the Bill of Rights was not immediately unanimous. Three states did not officially act on the measures. Georgia found the entire series of amendments unnecessary and declined to ratify. The Connecticut House and Senate agreed to approve Articles 3 through 12 but could not reach an accord on Articles 1 and 2 (dealing with numbers and compensation of elected representatives), ultimately failing to render a final approval. In Massachusetts, the State Senate approved ten of the 12 amendments and the House nine; however, the combined assembly could not agree on a joint resolution that would have led to ratification.

In 1939, during the observation of the 150th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, the three states did finally ratify the amendments, Massachusetts on 2 March, Georgia three weeks later, and Connecticut on 19 April.


CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE U.S. CONSTITUTION
15 DECEMBER 1791

A monument bearing the language of the first amendment stands outside Independence Hall in Philadelphia

The influence of other documents

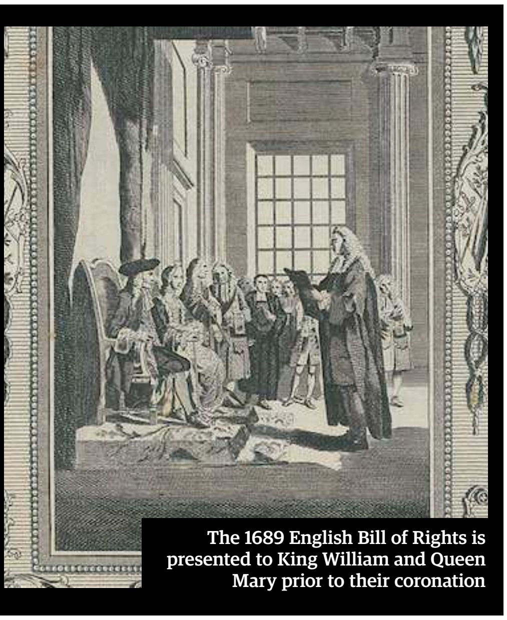
James Madison is remembered as a student of history as well as a skilled legislator, and his crafting of the Bill of Rights related specifically to tenets espoused in earlier documents that resonate throughout Anglo-American history.

Authored by George Mason, the Virginia Declaration of Rights had been ratified in June 1776. Much of its language was based on the earlier English Bill of Rights of 1689 and the writings of philosopher John Locke, a prominent individual of the Age of Enlightenment.

In 1628, the English Parliament enacted the Petition of Right, forbidding taxation without the consent of the legislative body and prohibiting the unlawful imprisonment of individuals. Six decades later, the 1689 English Bill of Rights arose following the reign of King Charles I and was adopted after the Glorious Revolution during the joint reign of William and Mary. Among its measures were prohibitions of cruel and unusual punishment and the levying of excessive fines.

Even earlier, the Magna Carta, signed at Runnymede by King John in 1215 on the demand of disaffected barons, had introduced the concept of limitations on tyrannical authority. Among its provisions were assertions of due process for those accused of crimes and warnings against practices that might unduly influence the carriage of justice.

Declarations of individual rights had been a component of colonial government for years, including assurances in various charters that the rights of those who settled in the New World would be protected in the same manner as if they continued to reside in England.

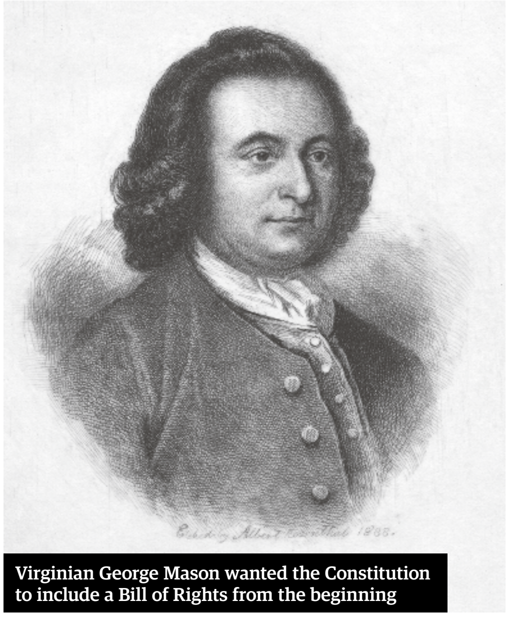


The 1689 English Bill of Rights is presented to King William and Queen Mary prior to their coronation

after a verdict is rendered. Compensation of owners is guaranteed in the event of property seizures through eminent domain. Further, prohibiting self-incrimination, the fifth amendment states that no individual accused of a crime shall be required to testify against themselves.

According to the sixth amendment, individuals accused of crimes are vested with basic rights, including that of a speedy and public trial; a trial by an impartial jury; the right to confront witnesses against them; the right to be informed of the specific charges on which they are being prosecuted; the right to compel witnesses to appear for court proceedings; and the right to benefit from the assistance of legal counsel. The seventh amendment relates to trial by jury in civil cases. It reads, “In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.” The eighth amendment reinforces the carriage of justice, reading, “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.”

In 1982, a student by the name of Gregory Watson discovered that an amendment dating back to 1789 was still pending

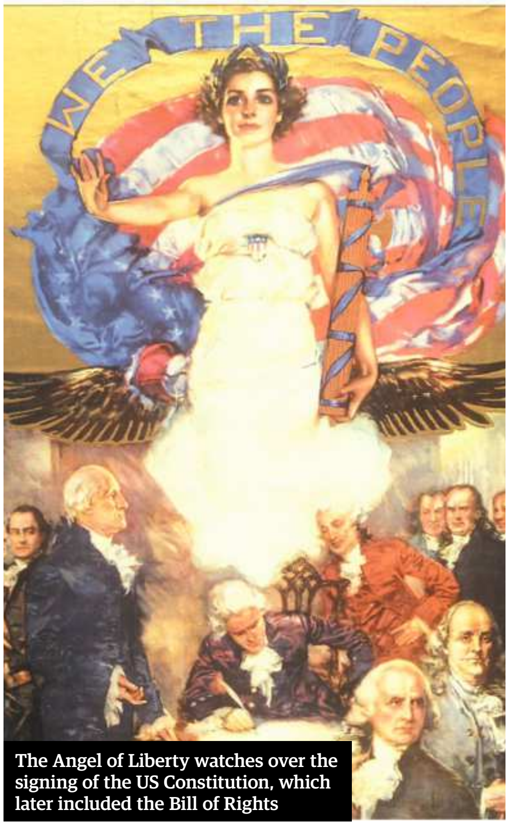


Virginian George Mason wanted the Constitution to include a Bill of Rights from the beginning

The ninth amendment concedes that the Constitution itself is not a complete, total recitation of fundamental rights and that other rights exist outside its framework, stating, “The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.”

Finally, the tenth amendment is succinct in its observation that those powers not vested in the federal government reside with the states and the people. It reads, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”

For more than two centuries the Constitution, as amended with the Bill of Rights and later in other circumstances has served as the foundation of government in the US. The Founding Fathers overcame their differences for the good of the country and the necessity of a functioning administration. The amendment process implies that changing times might require a review and revision of the Constitution. Its Bill of Rights preserves the personal liberties that have always been so dear to Americans, further enabling the advancement of a great endeavour in self-government, endorsed and affirmed by the people.



The Angel of Liberty watches over the signing of the US Constitution, which later included the Bill of Rights

“The Founding Fathers overcame their differences for the good of the country and the necessity of an administration”

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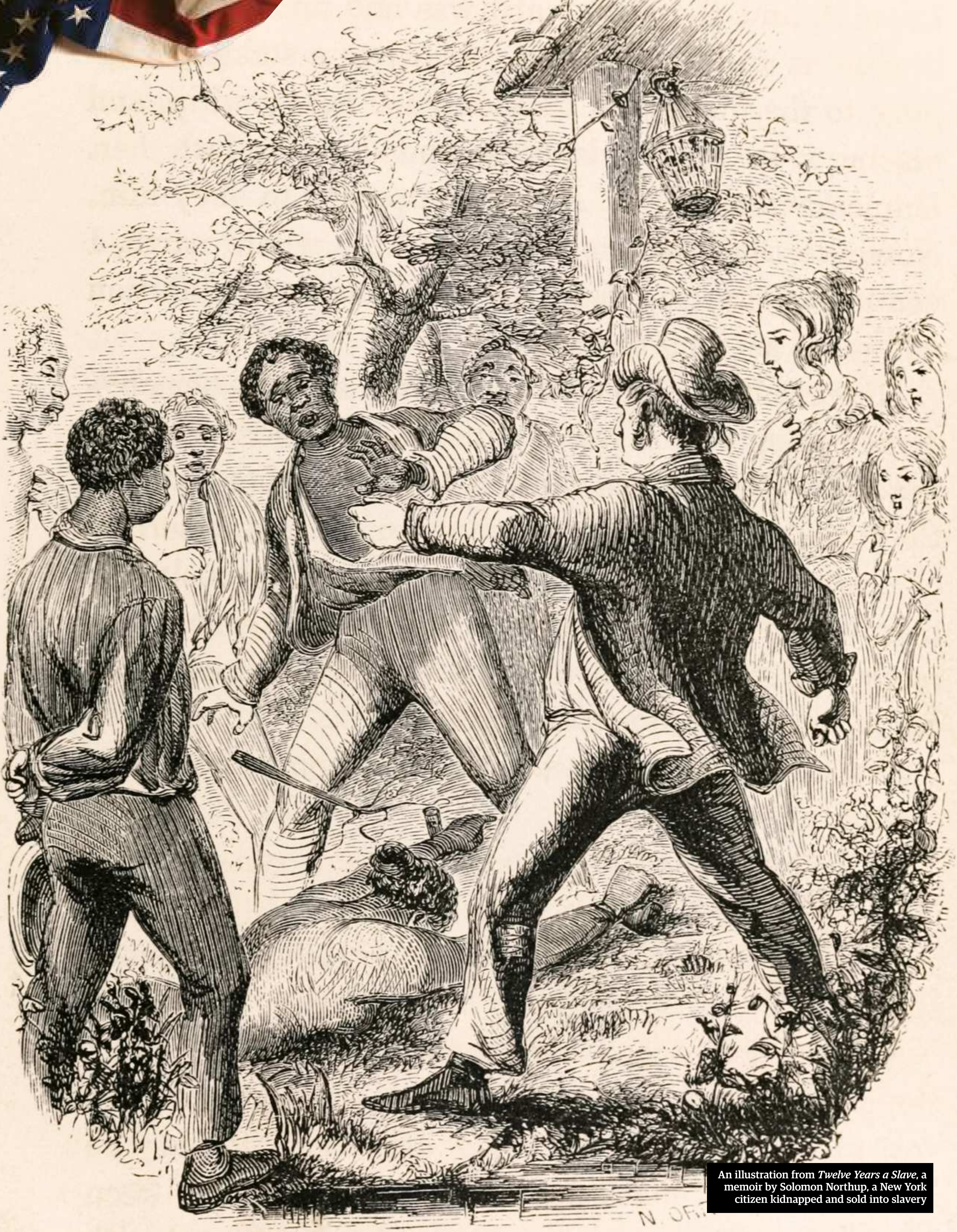

THE STAKING OUT AND FLOGGING OF THE GIRL PATSEY.

An illustration from *Twelve Years a Slave*, a memoir by Solomon Northup, a New York citizen kidnapped and sold into slavery

The Founding Fathers and slavery

For a new nation founded on the principle of freedom and liberty for all, the issue of slavery proved a knotty and complex problem

Thomas Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence addressed the issue of slavery head-on. After all, many of the leading American Patriots regarded themselves to be throwing off the yoke of slavery that was forced upon them by a tyrannical British Empire and were aware of the contradictions between an advocacy of political liberty and the continued presence of enslaved Africans.

Hence, in his draft, Jefferson condemned the injustice of the slave trade and thereby, by implication, the cruelty of slavery itself, and yet he blamed the presence of black slaves on rapacious British colonial policies. Thus Jefferson chose a shrewd stance: criticising the institution of slavery while at the same time absolving Americans from the responsibilities of ownership. The Founding Fathers, however, recognised the incongruity of this passage and omitted it from their final constitutional document. Their desire for unity among white Americans eclipsed their concerns about the enslaved black population of the country.

The issue of slavery and the Founding Fathers is a thorny and complex problem. The Founders – with the exception, it is said, of those from Georgia and South Carolina – proved, on the whole, opposed to the idea of slavery and yet many did not free their own slaves, and when it came to reform they attacked more fragile sections of the slave system. So, for example, they prohibited the importation of foreign slaves to individual states and they supported Jefferson's proposal to ban slavery in the Northwest Territory. The passing of the Northwest Ordinance in 1787 was crucial, with one important clause stating: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory."

And yet the importance of slave labour to the Southern states' economy was not lost on the Founders, and indeed the abolition of slavery in the Northwest gave an implicit legitimacy to a continuation of the practice in the Southwest. In addition, many historians have reported that the prohibition of slave imports allowed owners in the states like Virginia and Maryland to demand higher prices for the slaves they sold southwards. Slave numbers in the South did not noticeably diminish, either, as natural reproduction saw their numbers swell.

> The documentary evidence suggests that the first black Africans arrived during the 1610s, landing in Virginia, before the accepted date of 1619

The division between North and South had further implications, causing a polarisation in opinion and hardened Southern attitudes towards their slaves; an inclination to protect their property and economy strengthening southerners' conviction about the inferiority of the black race.

Disagreements over slavery raised their head at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, but again they were subsumed by a desire to retain unity among the nascent United States. The Founders therefore introduced clauses to be inserted in the Constitution that asked states to make compromises, while also recognising regional anomalies among the states' attitudes towards slavery. Notably, they came up with the "three-fifths" clause, a compromise agreement stating that the slave-holding states could count three-fifths of their slaves as members of the population when apportioning representation to Congress. This boosted the Southern states' standing in the House of Representatives.

As a compromise, the same figures were applied when judging property that should be assessed for tax, thereby increasing the tax burden on the slave-holding states. Arguments over the decision to ban the importation of slaves were assuaged by an agreement that the ban should not be introduced until 1808. The convention introduced the Fugitive Slave Acts, which encouraged the free states to return runaway slaves to their owners.

While the new federal government was unwilling to impose firm central control over the issue of

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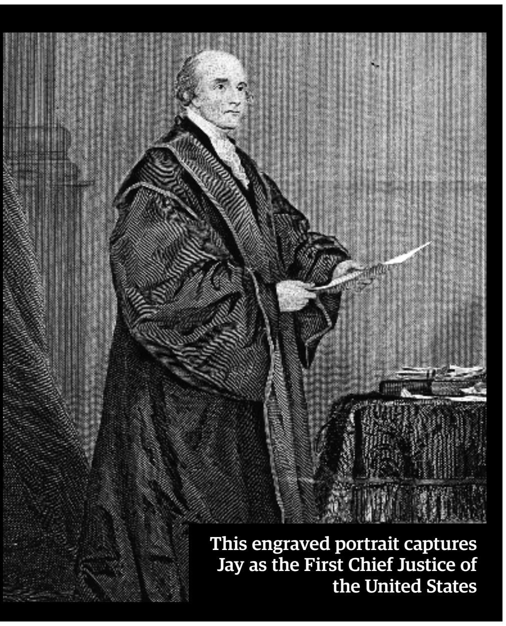
John Jay: New York's chief abolitionist

John Jay's father, Peter Jay, was one of New York State's largest slave owners and it was perhaps this close proximity to slavery that prompted John Jay to become one of the leading advocates of manumission. In 1777, he proactively sought out the abolition of slavery when helping to draft New York State's first constitution. It failed to gain passage, as did a second abolition law that he put forward in 1785, even though almost every member of the New York legislature had voted for some form of emancipation. The problem was that they could not agree on exactly what the freed slaves' rights should be. During 1785, Jay also founded the New York State Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, filing lawsuits on their behalf. In addition to this, Jay argued for the subsidising of black education and in 1787, he helped to found New York's African Free School.

In 1799 he became governor of New York State and introduced An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, which stated that from 4 July all children born to slave parents would become free, though male children would be required to serve the mother's owner until they reached 28 years of age, females until they hit 25. The act also banned the export of slaves from the state.

Paradoxically, in spite of all his efforts Jay remained a slave-owner, though he claimed that he would always "manumit them at proper ages and when their faithful services shall have afforded a reasonable retribution." His sons William and John Jay II were also strong voices in the abolitionist movement.



This engraved portrait captures Jay as the First Chief Justice of the United States

slavery, individual Founders had very personal and very different attitudes towards the practice. Among those who hoped for reform in the long-term were the likes of John Jay and Alexander Hamilton in New York and Benjamin Franklin over in Pennsylvania.

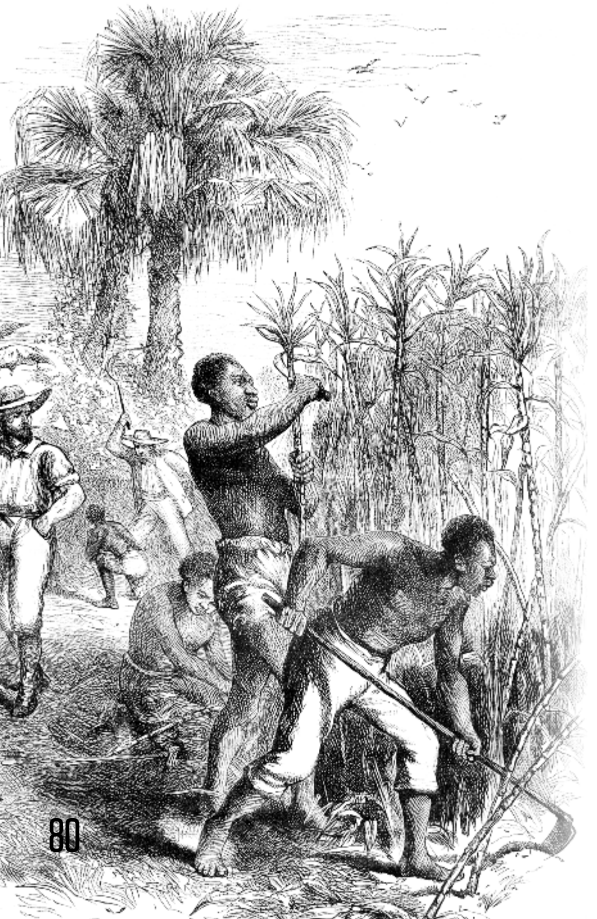
The fact they were Northerners points to the fact that the North's economy was not dependent on slave labour. Not so in the South. No Southern Founder who owned a plantation manumitted his slaves, with the sole exception of George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War, and the first president of the United States, and even he waited until his death. And, it should be noted, Washington's stance on slavery seems contradictory at times. Indeed, it might be argued that Washington's dilemma in how to deal with the morality of his slave holding mirrored the issues affecting the country as a whole.

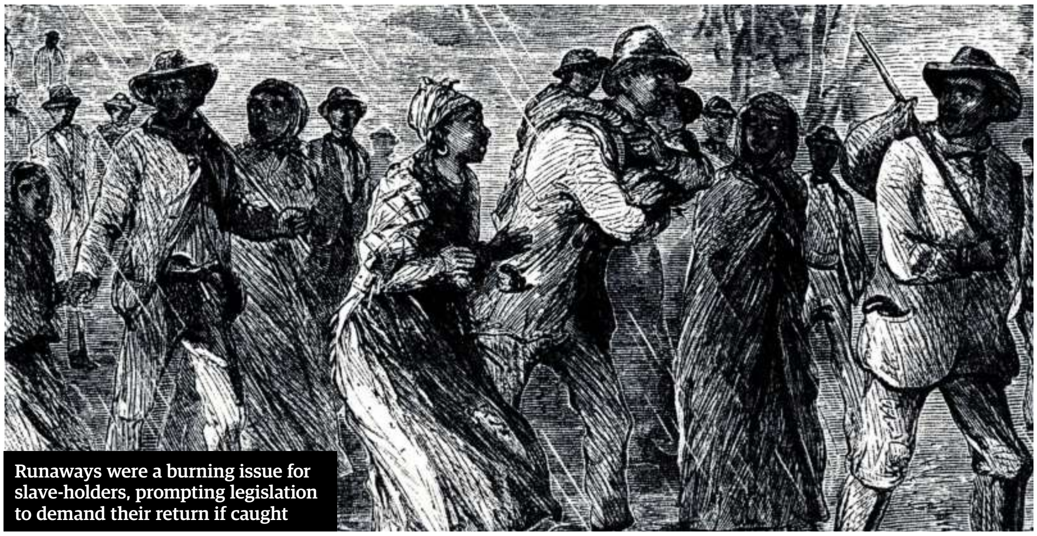
As many as 80,000 slaves quit America with the evacuating British forces following American success in the War of Independence

Most historians agree that Washington's attitude towards slavery shifted during the course of his lifetime, from a conventional slave-holder to what one writer describes as "a lukewarm abolitionist". He has attracted criticism for his public silence on the subject – his attitude can only be gleaned from a study of his private correspondence – though this ignores the fact that he had to act in such a way that conformed with and supported the ideas held within the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Federal interference with slave-holding, he realised, would cause irreparable damage to the new-born nation.

True, he had many slaves of his own that worked the five farms comprising his landholding at Mount Vernon – a census from February 1786 showed that he was the largest slave-owner in Virginia's Fairfax County – and while he treated them firmly he appears a far kinder patriarch than many of his local peers. As his life experience grew it seems he came to consider slavery repugnant but could see no other way to keep the Virginian economy on an even keel. He eventually freed his slaves, making arrangements in his will that they should be released after his wife's death. If he appears to have vacillated over slavery during his lifetime, he knew that entrenched attitudes could not be changed overnight.

Certainly, he showed nothing like the disdain for African Americans that appeared in the writings of Jefferson, whose attitudes are made clear in his Notes on the State of Virginia (1784) and his response to the 1791 Saint Domingue slave rebellion in the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.





Runaways were a burning issue for slave-holders, prompting legislation to demand their return if caught

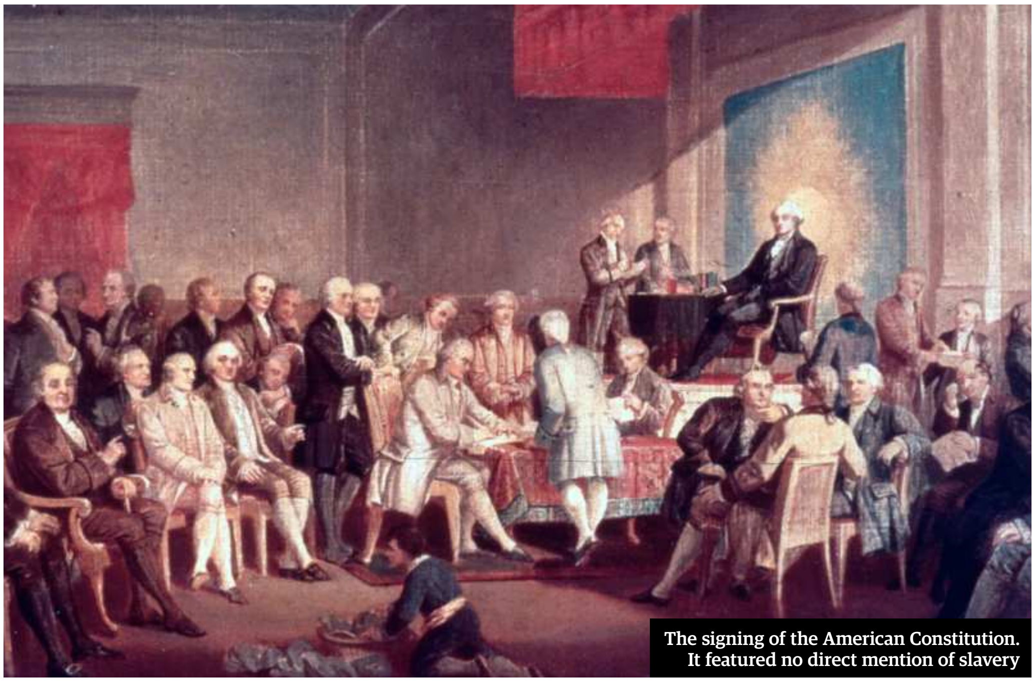
Thandie Newton played Sally Hemings in the 1995 movie *Jefferson in Paris*

The first American scandal

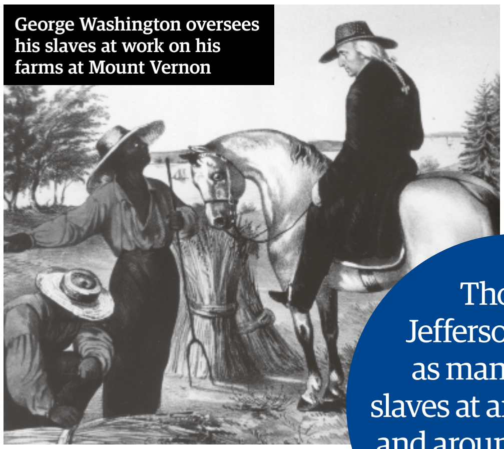
The flames of controversy surrounding Thomas Jefferson's attitude to African Americans have been fanned by his relationship with his mixed-race slave Sally Hemings. Until recent developments in genetic research, this relationship could be neither proved nor disproved, prompting one historian to describe it as the longest-running mini-series in American history. The story shifted in 1998 when DNA evidence emerged strongly suggesting that Jefferson had between one and six children with Hemings. Certainly, her offspring were fathered by a white male, and many noted that more than one child resembled Heming's master.

The story first emerged in 1802 with a story published in *The Richmond Recorder*, in which both journalist and editors were keen to tarnish Jefferson's reputation in the run-up to the presidential elections. Their plan had little effect as Jefferson won the 1804 elections comfortably. During the 19th century, two further pieces of evidence appeared. In 1873, one of the children, Madison Hemings, claimed that Thomas Jefferson was her father. Another story surfaced a short time later in James Parton's biography of Jefferson, which contained a story in which Jefferson's nephew, Peter Carr, claimed that he had fathered most of the children. And this was how the evidence stood until the 1998 DNA testing acknowledged that Jefferson's paternity was a very strong probability.

For Jefferson's admirers, this proved that he was not as racist as many thought. After all, this could well have been a sweet, forbidden love affair. Conversely, his detractors have used the evidence to suggest that Jefferson's disdain for African Americans led him to force himself, sexually, upon his slave, a move in keeping with predatory behaviour of many plantation owners.



The signing of the American Constitution. It featured no direct mention of slavery



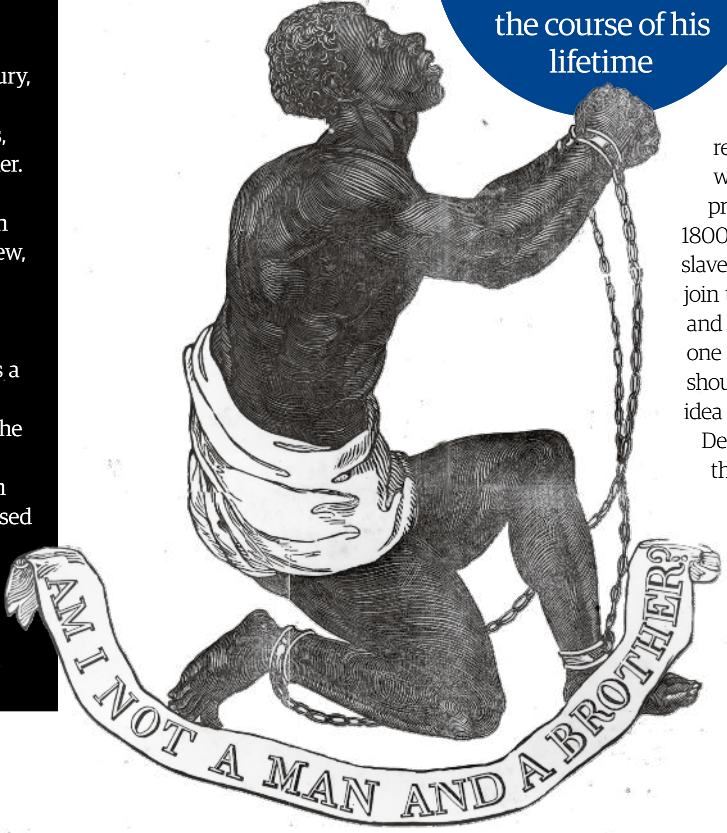
George Washington oversees his slaves at work on his farms at Mount Vernon

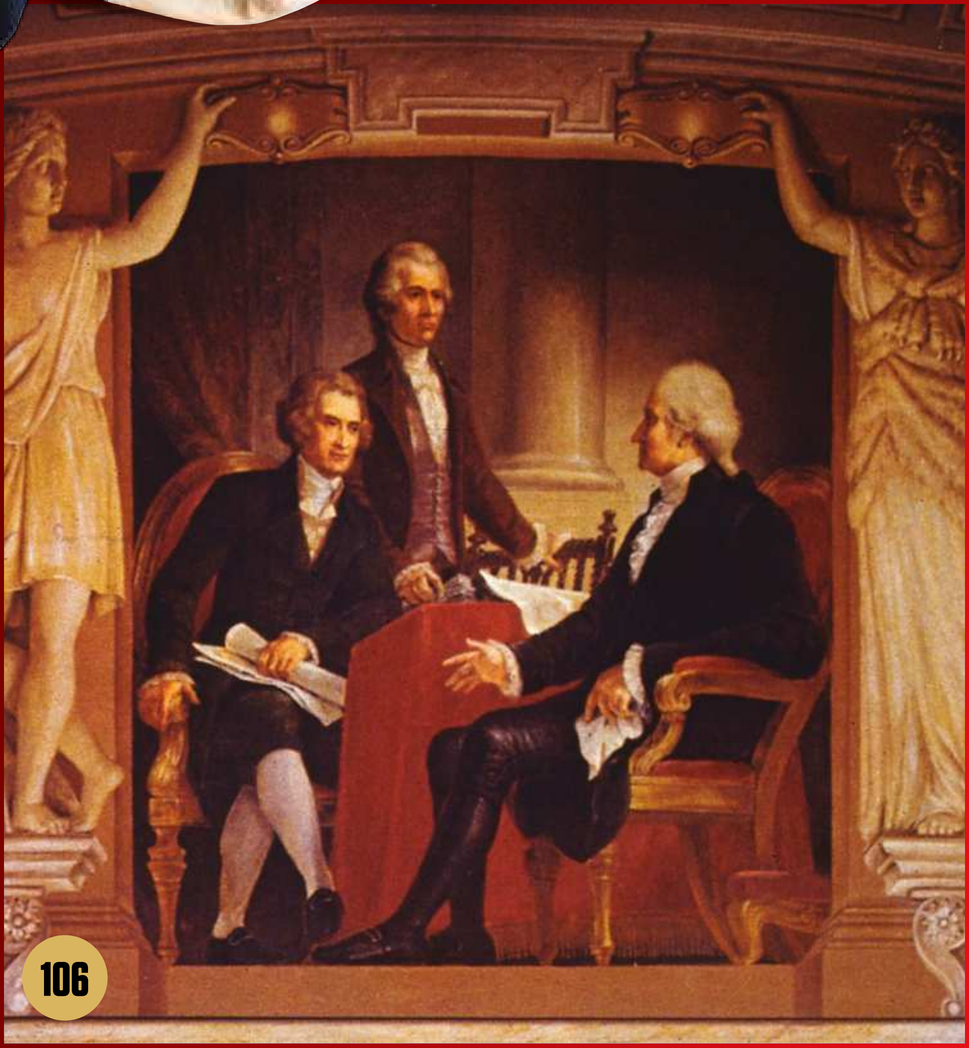
Notes on the State of Virginia is an interesting point of study as within its pages, he clearly asserts that it violates the principles upon which the new nation had been founded. He predicts that a terrifying, strife-torn future should abolition not come to pass. Conversely, the tract also expressed unequivocally that blacks were an inferior race to whites, a typically racist sentiment that was shared by almost all of his fellow Virginians, and America as a whole. His sentiments appalled many subsequent generations as it seems likely that he fathered six children with his mixed-race slave Sally Hemings.

Thomas Jefferson owned as many as 200 slaves at any one time and around 600 over the course of his lifetime

Jefferson endorsed the end of slave imports, as did most other Virginians, whose plantations were already well stocked and whose numbers were boosted by reproduction. He recognised that slavery was an anomaly in the new republic and proposed that all of the slaves born after 1800 should be freed, and a prohibition on slavery for any Western state that hoped to join the union. Jefferson believed that whites and free blacks could not live alongside one another, however, and that freed slaves should be returned to Africa. At the time, this idea found scant support.

Despite the criticisms on his views about the inferiority of black Africans, and the fact that he did not manumit his own slaves, Thomas Jefferson was a very liberal thinker in regard to policy. It appears that he had hoped that the Founders could ignite the spark that would eventually lead future generations to abolish slavery in the United States.


AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER?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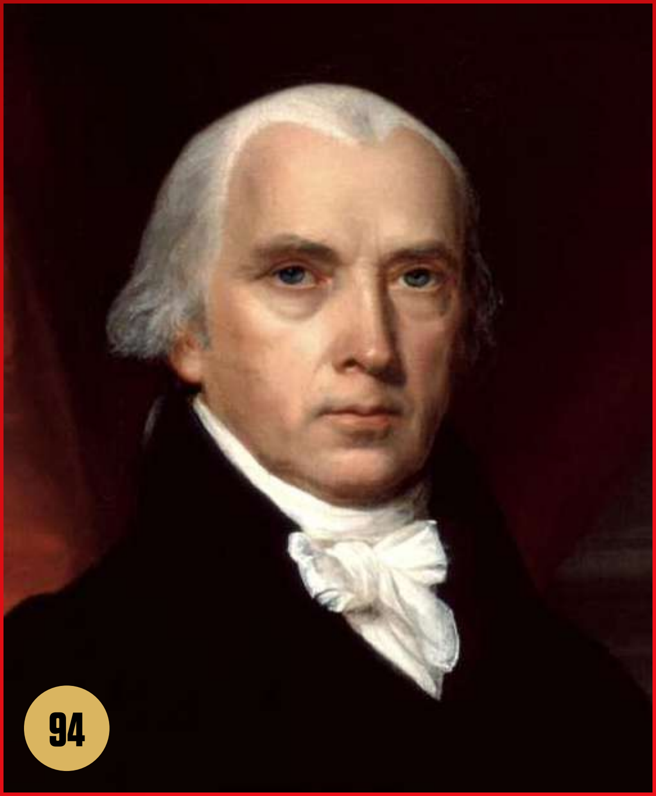
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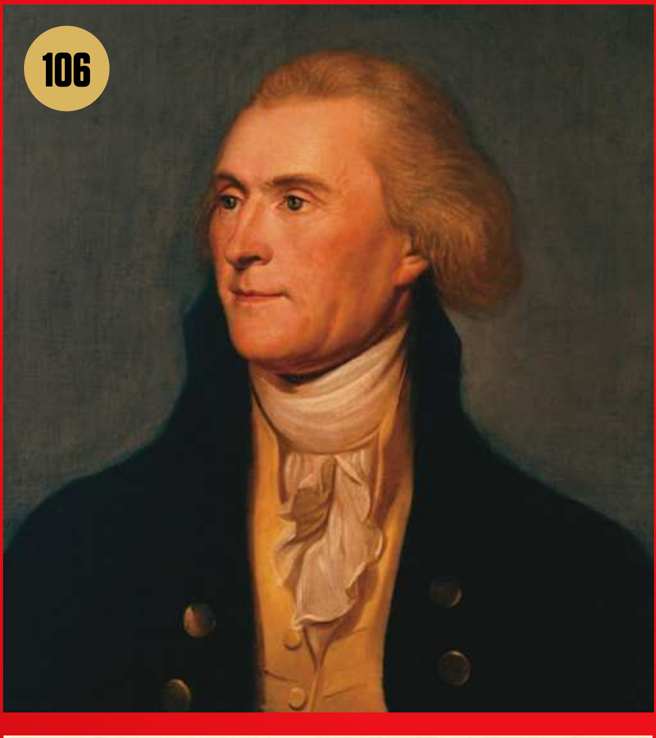
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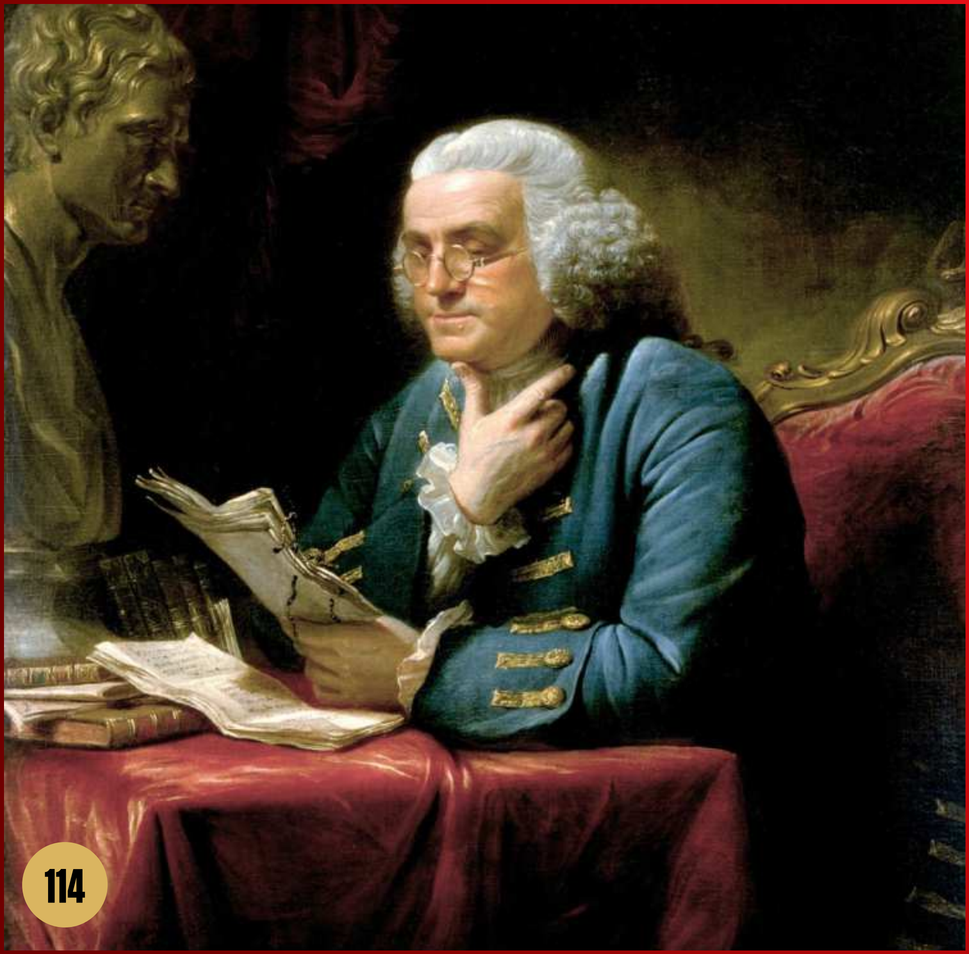
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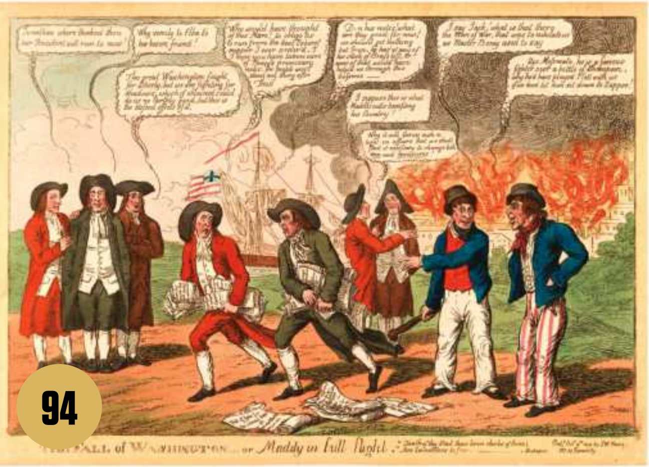
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FALL of WASHINGTON— or Maddy in full flight.

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In his final will Washington freed all his slaves

THE FIRST PRESIDENT WASHINGTON

Today George Washington is hailed as the father of the USA, but his journey to legendary hero was a perilous and difficult one

Long Island was supposed to be a success. The enemy was stronger and greater in number but the rebels had got there first. The commander had prepared everything for his foe's arrival in New York, strengthening his batteries and placing his generals perfectly. But the British had broken through. First Sullivan fell, then Stirling, and the commander could only watch as the lives of his brave men were brutally wiped away. Knowing all was lost he ordered his men to retreat before the carnage could reach them. As relentless rain pelted down he used the cover of darkness to help conceal his soldiers as they climbed into every available boat he could get his hands on. He waited until the last man was on board before he boarded himself. As the boat drew away the commander looked back through the thick fog that had descended over the bay. The mist had concealed them from the British, his men were safe, but Brooklyn had been lost.

This is not the story of a failed general, forgotten by the history books, but instead that of the most glorified and worshipped president in US history - George Washington. Just as his men were hidden by the fog that grim morning in Brooklyn, today Washington himself is cloaked and obscured by layers of myths and legends. He has become an almost messianic figure in the United States, a legend of justice and freedom, a brilliant commander who led his underdog army to the greatest victory in US history. But as with most legends, the stories are not always true. Far from being a brilliant military strategist, Washington actually lost more battles than he won. He was no Alexander or Caesar, but an entirely different kind of hero altogether - one who persevered in the face of devastating failure for his men and country.

Making History

3 reasons why Washington is considered the USA's greatest leader

1 Virtue

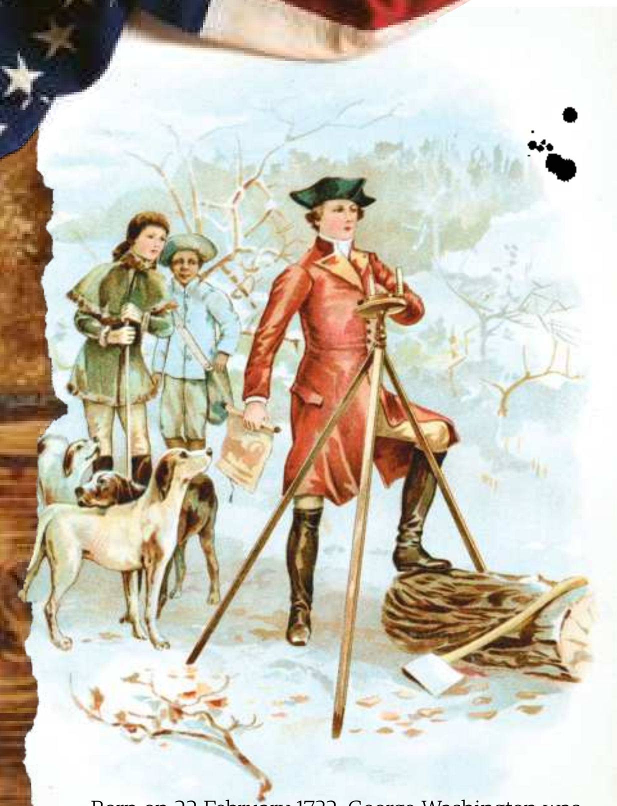
Washington twice gave up the chance of ultimate power. First at the end of the Revolutionary War when he surrendered his role as commander in chief, and again when he refused to rule as president for a third term. When George III was presented with the idea of Washington doing this, he said, "If he does that he will be the greatest man in the world."

2 Commitment to country

Washington did not become involved in the hostile arguments and squabbling of political debates, but instead acted as a peacekeeper between the groups. A true non-partisan, his primary aim was always the betterment of the country, rather than any personal gain.

3 Persistence

Washington was not the most gifted military leader; he suffered multiple losses and personal humiliations, but his determination to persevere in spite of repeated setbacks inspired his soldiers to do the same, which resulted in him creating one of the most celebrated underdog success stories in world history.



Born on 22 February 1732, George Washington was the son of a slave-owning tobacco planter. George received a mixed education from a variety of tutors, and plans for him to join the British Royal Navy were cut short when his mother objected. Fate instead led Washington to become a surveyor, and he travelled for two years surveying land in the Culpeper, Frederick and Augusta counties. This position began a lifelong interest in landholdings, and he purchased his first piece of land as soon as his sizable income filled his pockets. And when his older brother died in 1752, Washington inherited not only his father's vast lands, but also the position of major in the Virginia militia.

It would not be long until Washington's natural leadership and drive would send him straight into the heat of battle. At a staggering 188 centimetres (6'2") tall, the young man towered above his contemporaries, and Virginia's Lieutenant General Robert Dinwiddie saw fit to use his imposing but inspiring nature to try to persuade the French to remove themselves from land claimed by Britain. When they refused, Washington returned with a small force and attacked the French post at Fort Duquesne, killing the commander and nine men and taking the others as prisoners, all in 15 minutes. The event had huge international implications, and Great Britain and France began to pump forces into North America - The French and Indian War had begun. In a matter of minutes the name Washington became synonymous with three things - bravery, daring and recklessness.

Washington was rewarded for his quick thinking by being appointed commander in chief and colonel of the Virginia Regiment, the first full-time American military unit. With command of a thousand soldiers, Washington was tasked with defending Virginia's frontier, and he demonstrated his resolve and forthright approach as his unit engaged in 20 battles over 12 months. But his reckless attitude and inexperience was demonstrated when his unit exchanged friendly fire with another British force, killing 14 men.

> "He was no Alexander or Caesar, but an entirely different kind of hero altogether"

His time commanding an army had taught Washington many things - how to bring the best out of his men, the importance of stamina and bravery, as well as discipline and training. It had also given him valuable insight into the British military tactics, and his struggles in dealing with government officials convinced him that a national government was the only way forward. However, when Washington retired from service in 1758, as far as he was concerned his time on the battlefield was over.

In 1759 Washington married the intelligent and wealthy Martha Dandridge Custis and together with her two children they moved to the plantation of Mount Vernon. Enjoying the newly inherited wealth from his marriage, Washington was now one of Virginia's wealthiest men and he concentrated on expanding and making the most out of his plantation. Little did he know that revolution was bubbling, and soon he would find himself back on the battlefield in what would become the most famous war in American history.

Washington wasn't the most likely of revolutionary leaders; although he opposed the controversial Stamp Act of 1765, during the early stirrings of revolution he was actually opposed to the colonies declaring independence. It wasn't until the passing of the Townshend acts of 1767 that he took an active role in the resistance. In an act of rebellion he encouraged the people of Virginia to boycott English goods until the acts were repealed. However, when the Intolerable acts were passed in 1774, Washington decided that more forthright action needed to be taken.

Passionate and charismatic, Washington was an obvious choice to attend the First Continental Congress. Although the delegates appealed to the crown to revoke the intolerable acts, they didn't even make a dink in the steely British armour, and a Second Continental Congress was called the following year.

A lot had changed in a year, and Washington too had undergone something of a transformation. The battles at Lexington and Concord had shown the colonies that they were capable of taking on the might of the British, and when Washington arrived in Pennsylvania for the state meeting dressed head to toe in military gear, it sent a strong message: he was prepared for war. So was Congress. It formed the Continental Army on 14 June 1775 and it needed a leader. Reluctant and somewhat modest,

The March To Revolution

Follow the path leading to the greatest war in American history

1754-1763

French and Indian War
The French and Indian War was part of a much longer conflict between Great Britain and France, known as the Seven Years War. The war was fought in the north of North America between the colonies of the two powers, ending with France losing its territory in North America. However, funding the war created a huge national debt in Britain and gave France a good reason to support American independence.

1765

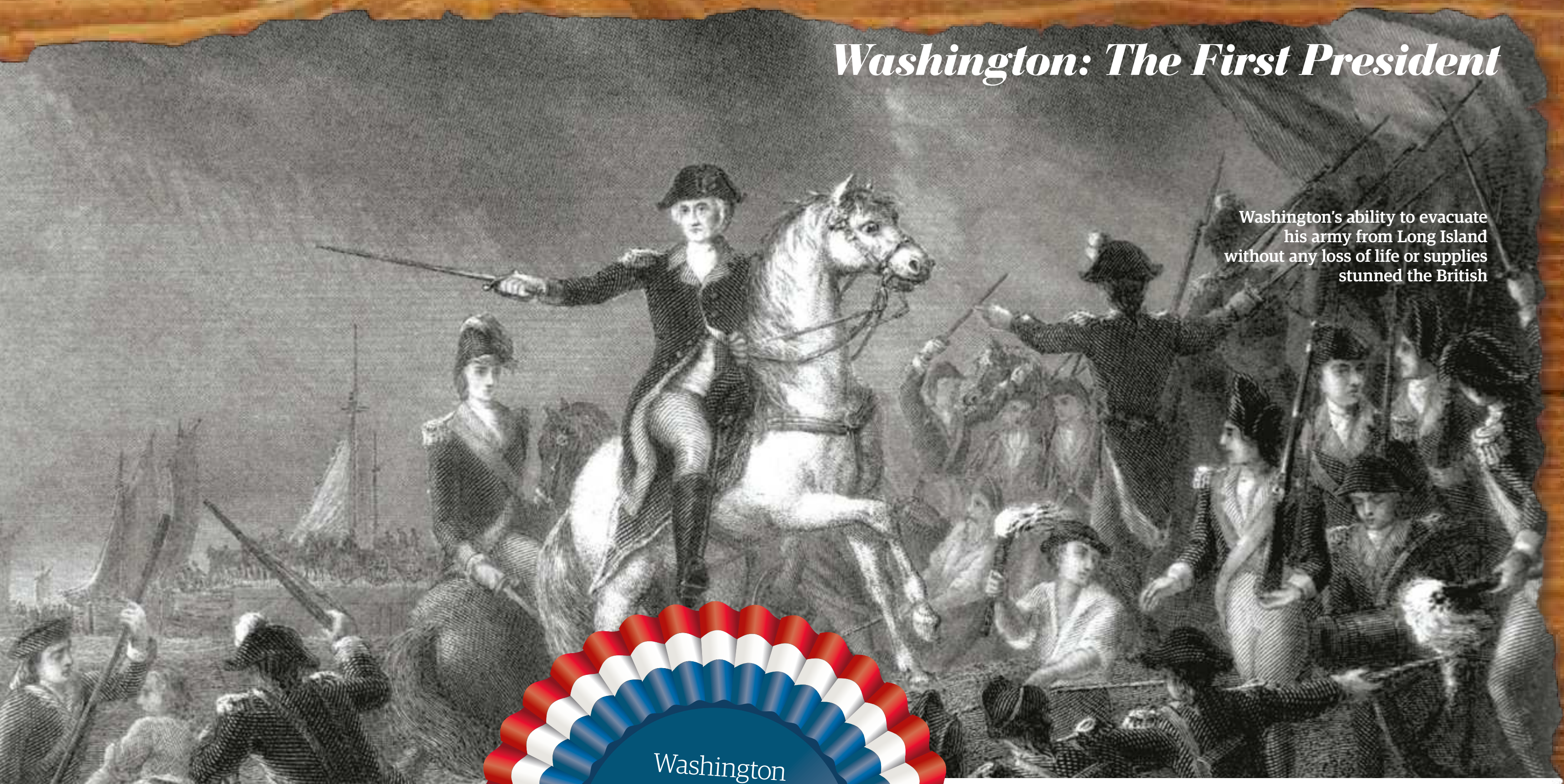
Stamp Act
The resulting national debt of the Seven Years War in Britain had reached £130 million by 1764. Britain also needed a way to pay for its army in North America and decided the colonies should subsidise it. The Stamp Act forced citizens to pay taxes on documents and paper goods and was immediately unpopular as it was carried out without any consent. The outrage soon turned violent and the tax was never collected.

1767-1770

Townshend Acts
The Townshend Acts were a series of acts passed by the British Parliament upon the colonies in North America. These acts placed duties on vital, high-volume imported items such as glass, paints, paper and tea, among other things. The money raised was intended to pay to keep governors and judges loyal, and also to set a general precedent that the British had the right to tax the American colonies.

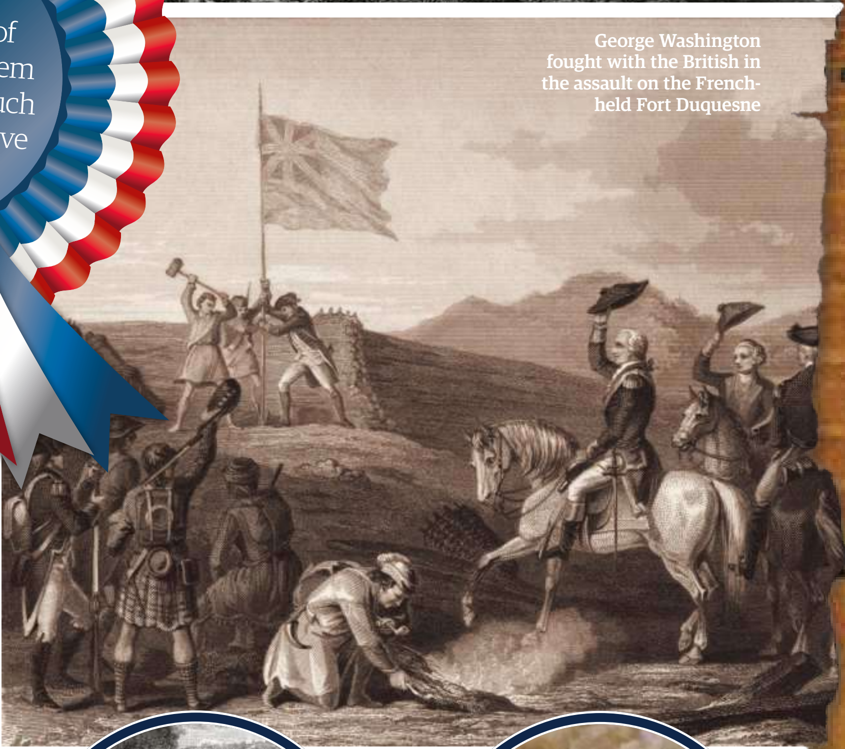
1770

Boston Massacre
This incident occurred when a heckling crowd gathered around a British guard, who was quickly joined by eight more British soldiers. The soldiers fired at the crowd, killing three people and wounding multiple others. Two more later died of their wounds. The soldiers were arrested for manslaughter but were released without charge. This event helped to create an immensely anti-British sentiment in the colonies.

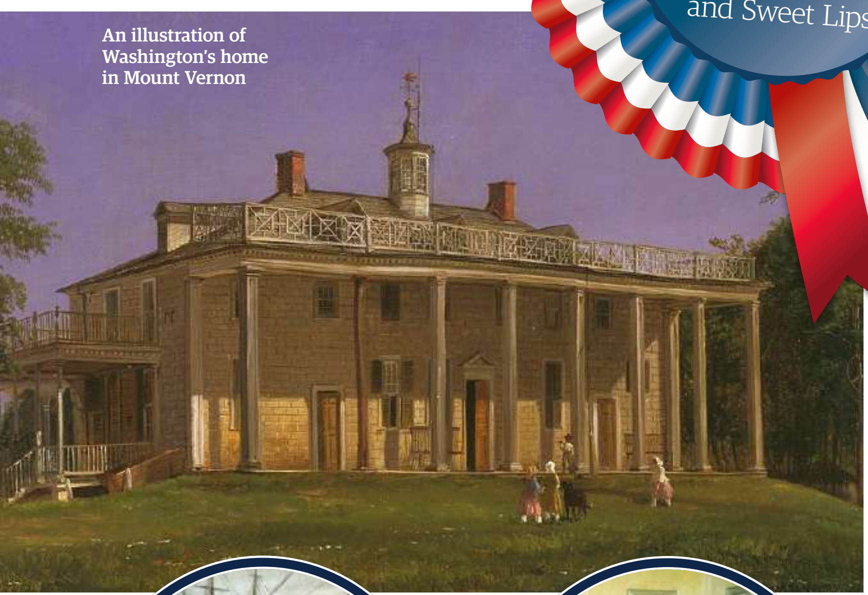


Washington's ability to evacuate his army from Long Island without any loss of life or supplies stunned the British

Washington was very fond of dogs and gave them unusual names such as Tarter, True Love and Sweet Lips



George Washington fought with the British in the assault on the French-held Fort Duquesne



An illustration of Washington's home in Mount Vernon

1773

Boston Tea Party

In an effort to force the colonies to accept the Townshend duty on Tea, Britain passed the Tea Act, allowing the East India Company to ship its tea to North America. In defiance, protestors boarded the ships and threw chests full of tea into Boston Harbour. Parliament responded harshly, by passing the Intolerable Acts, which took away the rights of the state of Massachusetts to govern itself.

1774

First Continental Congress

Delegates from 12 of the 13 British colonies in America met at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia to discuss ways to halt the Intolerable Acts. They made plans to refuse to import British goods until their grievances were met. When these efforts proved unsuccessful, a Second Continental Congress was held the next year to prepare the country for the impending American Revolutionary War.

1775

The Battles of Lexington and Concord

When American intelligence learned that British troops planned to march on Concord, they were quick to assemble their forces and take up arms against them. However only 77 militiamen faced 700 British at Lexington and were quickly defeated. The British continued to Concord to search for arms, but they were forced back by 500 militiamen, winning the colonies their first war victory.

1775

Battle of Bunker Hill

Set during the Siege of Boston, this battle saw the British mount an attack against the colonial troops stationed in Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. Although the British were victorious, the heavy losses suffered by the redcoats led it to be a hollow victory, and it proved the Americans could hold their own against their foes in battle. Shortly after the conflict, King George III officially declared the colonies to be in a state of rebellion.

Washington did not see himself as a leader capable of leading such a vitally important force, but for those around him there was no other choice. With proven military experience, a devoted patriot and a strong, commanding presence, Washington was appointed commander in chief of the force that would take on the mightiest nation on Earth.

It did not take long for the new commander to prove his worth. In early-March 1776, Washington turned the Siege of Boston around by placing artillery on Dorchester Heights, low hills with a good view of Boston and its harbour. The perfectly placed, powerful cannons forced the British to retreat from the city, and the American commander moved his army into New York City. Even the critical British papers couldn't deny the skills of the captivating and exciting new leader who seemed capable of repelling their great empire with ease.

Victory and gossip aside, in truth Washington was out of his depth. He had commanded men before, but only a force of a thousand soldiers - far from the tens of thousands at his disposal now. He had only fought in frontier warfare, far removed from the open-field battles he now faced. He had never commanded legions of cavalry or artillery - he was constantly learning on the job. Washington had to rely on his own intelligence and courage to have any hope of snatching victory from his seasoned, experienced rivals.

This inexperience manifested itself in the crippling defeat the commander suffered during the Battle of Long Island. In an effort to seize New York, the British general William Howe unleashed a devastating campaign that Washington failed to subdue. So great was the British attack that Washington was forced to retreat his entire army across the East River under cover of darkness. Although this feat itself was remarkable, for the self-critical leader it was a swift and brutal reminder of his own inadequacies as a general, and he quickly realised this war would not be easily won.

But the British had a crippling weakness, too. They were simply too sure they were going to win. Howe so fatally underestimated the will of the American troops and their reckless leader that he left his Hessian soldiers at Trenton, confident the war would be won in the next few months. Washington, on the other hand, was acutely aware of the morale of his soldiers. After the defeat in New York and the humiliating retreat, they needed something positive to inspire them, and Trenton was right there for the taking.

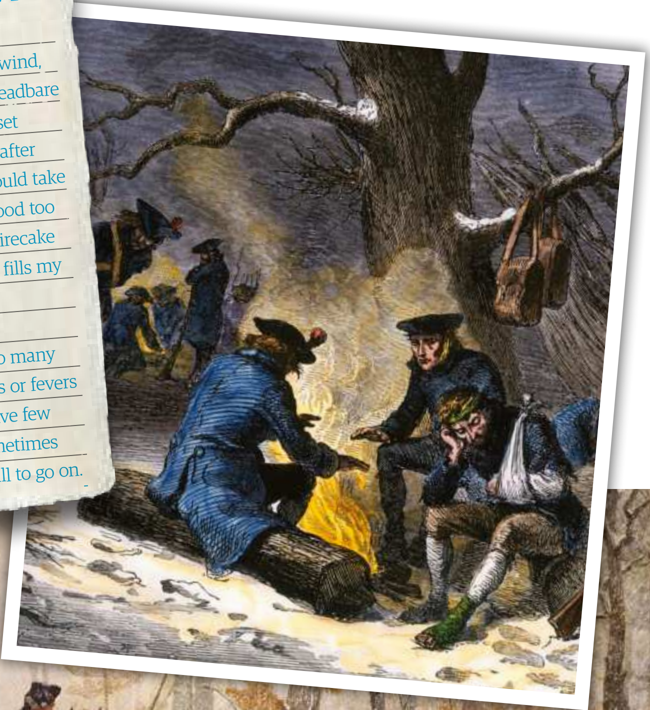
The plan was one only Washington could have thought up - bold, gutsy and downright dangerous, he led his soldiers across the perilous and icy Delaware River on a freezing Boxing Day in 1776. Only 2,400 of his men were able to make it across without turning back, but it was enough.

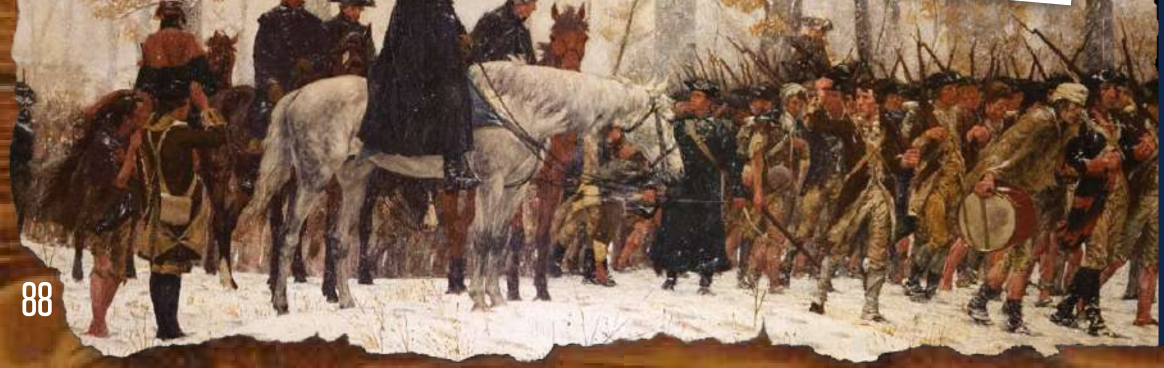
Valley Forge

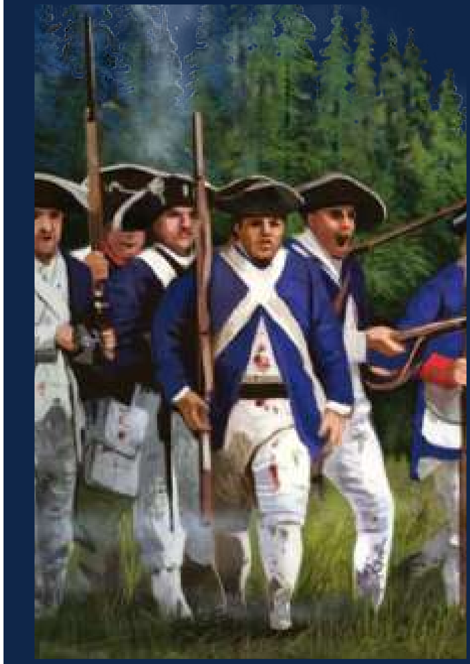
Pennsylvania, 28 January 1777

The cold today was worse than it has ever been. The crowded wooden huts provide shelter from the biting wind, but the cold passes between the slats, through my threadbare shirt and nestles in my bones. My quest to procure a set of shoes continues to be unsuccessful. I thought that after marching through the snow in bare feet someone would take pity on me - but there are no supplies coming. The food too is running low. For the past week I have only eaten firecake - a sticky, bland abomination of water and flour that fills my stomach but leaves the soul ravenous.

I shouldn't complain - I am one of the lucky few untouched by the diseases that ravage the camp. So many men have been plagued by itchy rashes and blisters or fevers that refuse to calm. The only relief here are the brave few women who wash and mend our uniforms, or sometimes simply provide a shoulder to men who have no will to go on.







Rebels

Organisation

There were 35,000 continentals in the United States with 44,500 militia. Their French allies increased their numbers with 12,000 French soldiers in America and 63,000 at Gibraltar. They also had 53 ships in service throughout the war. George Washington was commander in chief and Nathanael Greene served as major general.

Weapons

When the war began the colonies did not have a professional standing army of any kind, with many colonies only able to supply minutemen who were required to equip themselves - with most carrying rifles. The army's weapon of choice was the flintlock musket and they also carried bayonets.

Resources

The Continental Army suffered from massive supply issues. Supplies were repeatedly seized by British patrols. They also had to combat a primitive road system, which resulted in regular shortages of food, clothing, ammunition, tents and a host of essential military equipment, constantly pitching the odds against them.

Morale

The rebels' greatest weapon was the belief in their grand cause - fighting for their liberty from the oppressive British Crown. It was this strong morale belief in their cause that encouraged American leaders, who knew they were facing a well equipped and disciplined foe, to push on despite multiple crippling defeats.

Redcoats

Organisation

There were 56,000 British redcoats in North America along with a combined force of 52,000 loyalists, freed slaves and natives. They also had 78 Royal Navy ships at their service. William Howe served as commander in chief, but there were many decorated generals and officers such as Thomas Gage and Henry Clinton.

Weapons

The British army depended on the .75-calibre flintlock musket popularly known as "Brown Bess." They also carried bayonets and, occasionally, short-barrel muskets. The redcoats also used cannons to great effect, to the degree that if an American unit was without cannon, they would not face a cannon-supported British troop.

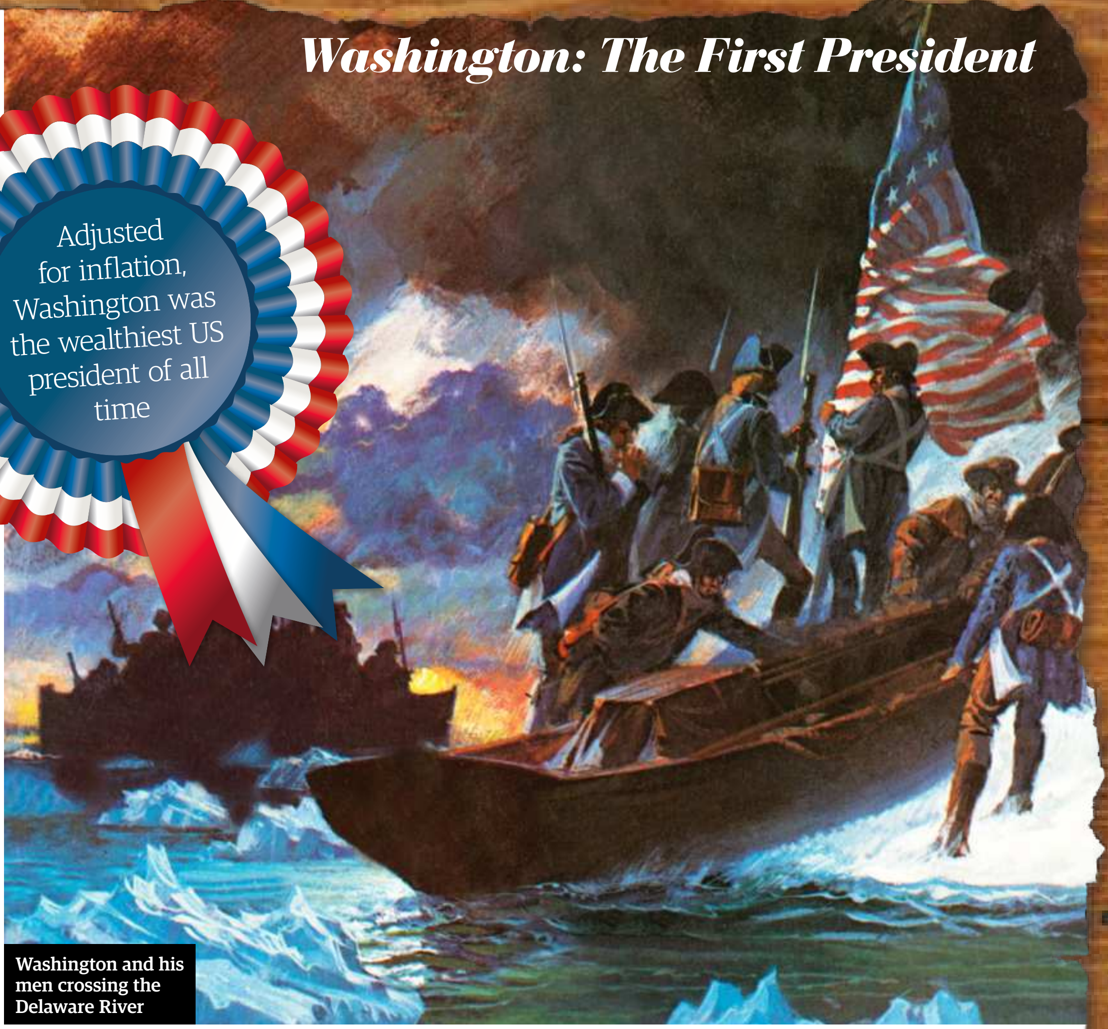
Resources

Although British soldiers were better equipped than their American counterparts, they were fighting away from home, and supplies could take months to reach their destinations. Many British had to rely on loyal locals supplying them with food and praying the vital supplies would survive the 4,800km (3,000mi) trip across the ocean.

Morale

The British believed they could easily steamroll the rebels and this underestimation of their foe cost them dearly. The war was also expensive, and support at home was mixed at best. For many soldiers struggling in terrible conditions away from home, there was little motivation to fight.

Adjusted for inflation, Washington was the wealthiest US president of all time



Washington and his men crossing the Delaware River

Completely unprepared for the attack, the Hessians at Trenton were overwhelmed and swiftly defeated by Washington and his men. A few days later the commander led a counter-attack on a British force sent to attack his army at Princeton, achieving another small - but essential - American victory.

Meanwhile, the British redcoats still believed the rebellion could be stopped like a cork in a bottle. Howe thought that by taking control of key colonial cities, the river of rebellion would turn into a drought and the population would surrender to British rule. When Howe set his sights on the revolutionary hub of Philadelphia, Washington rode out to meet him, but, perhaps with his previous victories clouding his judgement, the commander was outmatched and Philadelphia fell to the British. However, the colonists' cause received a major boon when British General Burgoyne was forced to surrender his entire army of 6,300 men at the Battle of Saratoga. It seemed that major world players were finally beginning to believe the Americans had a chance of besting the mighty British Empire, and France openly allied itself with the rebels.

While General Howe concentrated on capturing key cities, Washington had a revelation. Although individual battles were important, the key to victory was not military success, but instead his ability to keep the heart of the resistance alive and pumping. This was something out of British hands and solely in his own.

This spirit of rebellion faced its most challenging obstacle yet over the long winter of 1777. For six long months the soldiers at the military camp of Valley Forge suffered thousands of disease-ridden deaths. With starvation rife and supplies low, many feared the horrendous conditions would force the desperate army to mutiny. Washington himself faced immense criticism from the American public and Congress, who urged him to hurry the war effort, while behind the scenes anti-Washington movements gained ground. Washington simply replied: "Whenever the public gets dissatisfied with my service [...] I shall quit the helm [...] and retire to a private life." The critics soon fell silent.

Although the conditions had been testing, to put it mildly, the soldiers emerged from the

> "When Washington retired from service in 1758, as far as he was concerned, his time on the battlefield was over"

winter in good spirits. Washington demonstrated that his sting was stronger than ever when his forces attacked the British flank attempting to leave Monmouth Courthouse. Although the battle ultimately ended in a stalemate, Washington had finally achieved what he set out to do since the beginning of the war – hold his own in a pitched battle. This was massive for the Americans; it proved the growing Continental Army was developing its skills at an alarming speed, and if the horrendous winter they had emerged from had not crushed them, what chance did the British have? The French seemed to share this attitude. On 5 September 1781, 24 French ships emerged victorious against 19 British vessels at the Battle of Chesapeake. The success prevented the British from reinforcing the troops of Lord Cornwallis, who was blockaded in Yorktown, Virginia, and allowed crucial French troops to pour into the Continental Army, bringing vast supplies of artillery with them. This was exactly the opportunity Washington needed, and he didn't plan to let it go to waste.

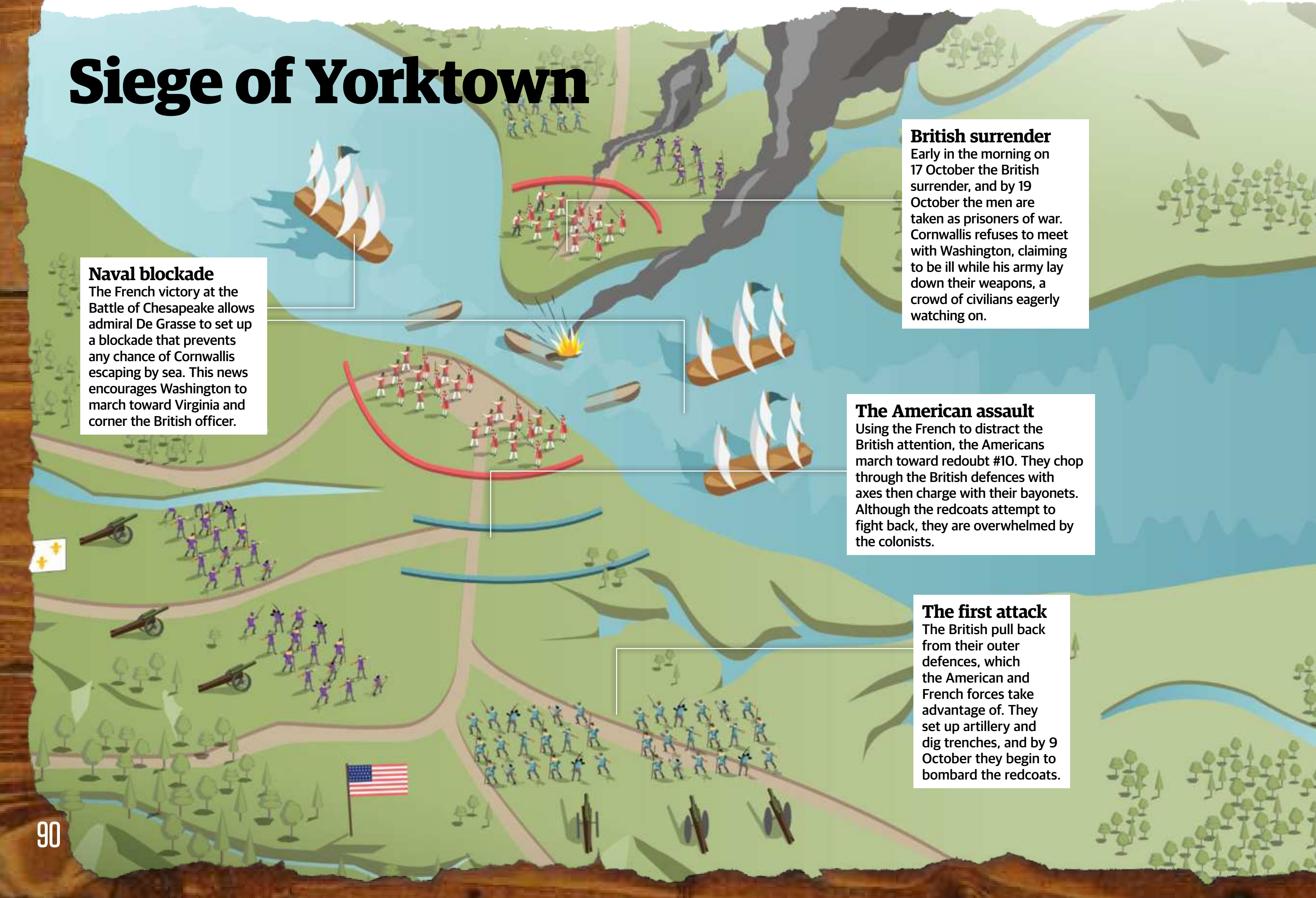
With the British army trapped and exposed, and his own swelling in size, Washington led his men out of Williamsburg and surrounded Yorktown. From late-September the Continental Army moved steadily closer to the redcoats, forcing them to pull back from their outer defences, which left them open for the Americans and French to use. As the colonists began to set up artilleries, the British pelted them with steady fire. In spite of this and at some great risk to himself, Washington continued to visit and motivate his men on the front line, and by 5 October the commander was ready to make his move.

As a vicious storm raged, Washington grasped his pickaxe in his hand and struck several blows into the dirt that would become the new trench the Americans would use to bombard the British. By 5pm on 9 October, the Americans were pelting the British with a relentless stream of cannon fire. The British ships were sunk and soldiers deserted en masse. More American trenches were dug as they gained land, and when Washington's men rushed toward the British redoubt, they overwhelmed the surprised redcoats. As Washington rained artillery fire down on the town, Cornwallis's attempts at escape across the York River were unsuccessful and he finally surrendered.

Little did Washington know that the victory he had secured at Yorktown would lead to the ultimate surrender of British hostilities, the end of the war and ultimately American freedom. On 3 September 1783 the Treaty of Paris was signed between representatives of both countries, which proclaimed that Britain recognised the independence of

The Capitol in Washington, DC, under construction

Siege of Yorktown

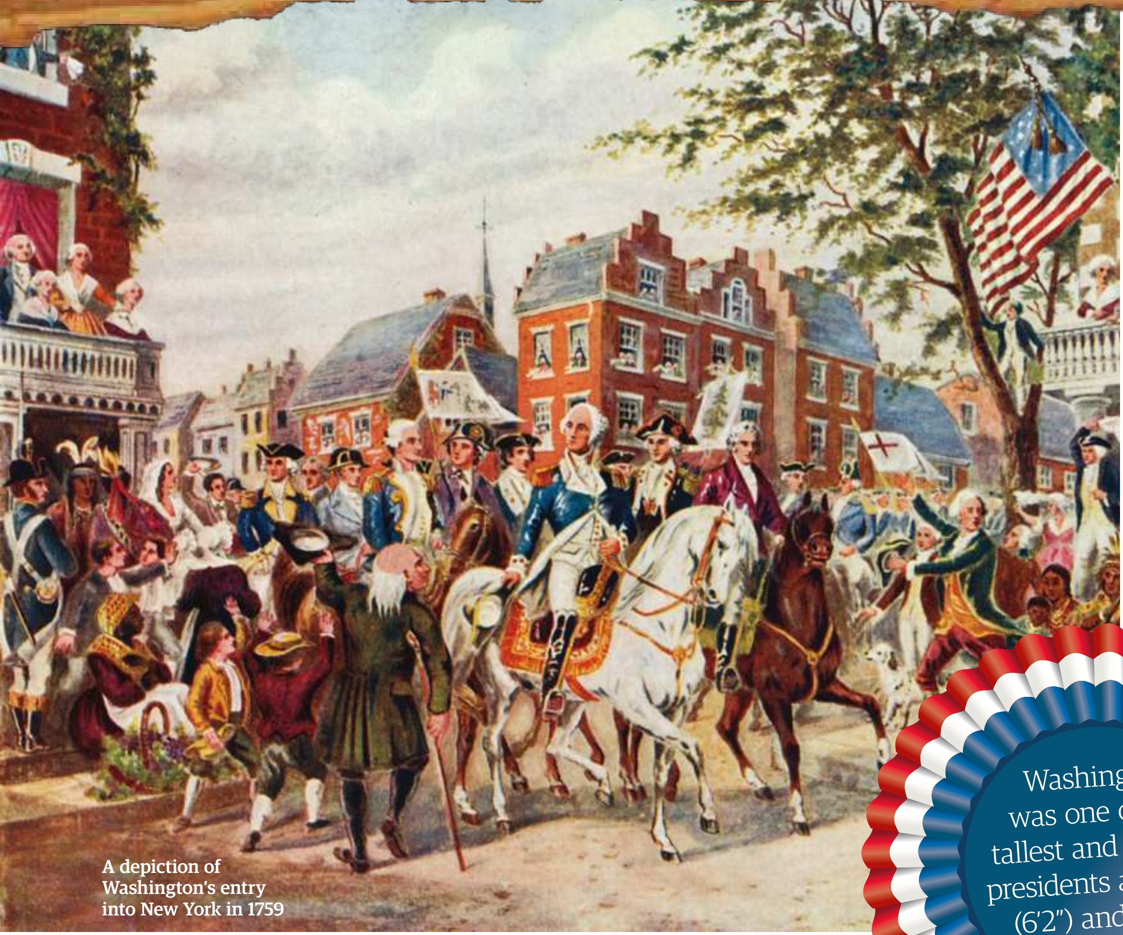


British surrender
Early in the morning on 17 October the British surrender, and by 19 October the men are taken as prisoners of war. Cornwallis refuses to meet with Washington, claiming to be ill while his army lay down their weapons, a crowd of civilians eagerly watching on.

Naval blockade
The French victory at the Battle of Chesapeake allows admiral De Grasse to set up a blockade that prevents any chance of Cornwallis escaping by sea. This news encourages Washington to march toward Virginia and corner the British officer.

The American assault
Using the French to distract the British attention, the Americans march toward redoubt #10. They chop through the British defences with axes then charge with their bayonets. Although the redcoats attempt to fight back, they are overwhelmed by the colonists.

The first attack
The British pull back from their outer defences, which the American and French forces take advantage of. They set up artillery and dig trenches, and by 9 October they begin to bombard the redcoats.



A depiction of Washington's entry into New York in 1759

Washington has been immortalised on Mount Rushmore along with Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln

the United States. With victory declared, Washington disbanded his army and wished farewell to the men who had valued him not only as a leader, but also a fellow soldier. On 23 December 1783, in an action that would define him in the history books, he resigned as commander in chief of the army and humbly returned to his home in Mount Vernon.

However, without him his country was struggling. With nobody to unite them the states fought and squabbled among themselves over boundaries and inflicted harsh taxes on their own citizens. The ex-commander watched from afar as the land he had led to freedom struggled to support itself. He was dismayed, but hesitant to act. It wasn't until an armed uprising known as Shays' Rebellion took place in Massachusetts that Washington was finally persuaded to step into the limelight once more.

Washington quietly attended the Constitution Convention held in Philadelphia in 1787. There he sat and listened silently to the proceedings, speaking only once. However, his prestige spoke volumes and those gathered there agreed the national government needed more authority - it needed a figure strong and commanding enough to maintain control. Washington was unanimously chosen to fulfil this role. He became president of the convention in 1787, and by 1789 he was unanimously elected once more, but this time as the first-ever president of the United States - the only one in history to receive 100 per cent of the votes. He would serve two terms as president from 1789 to 1797 until he would yet again relinquish the power he could so easily have exploited. In the spring of 1797, he finally returned to his precious Mount Vernon, realising, perhaps more so than any one of the many people who supported him, that ultimate power in the land of the free could not lay solely in one man's hands indefinitely.

> "Washington did not see himself as a leader capable of leading such a vitally important force"

Washington was one of the tallest and biggest presidents at 1.88m (6'2") and 90kg (200lb)

Washington myths cut down

We get an expert opinion on the myths surrounding this legendary man

Stephen Brumwell is a freelance writer and independent historian living in Amsterdam. His book, *George Washington: Gentleman Warrior*, won the 2013 George Washington Book Prize.

He had wooden teeth

George Washington was plagued with dental problems from his twenties, and by 1789, had just one of his own teeth remaining. He owned several sets of false teeth, but none was crafted from wood. Instead, Washington's dentures incorporated a variety of materials - bone, 'sea-horse', or hippopotamus ivory, and human teeth - fixed by lead, gold and metal wire. The belief that Washington's false teeth were wooden probably originated in the brown-stained appearance of surviving examples - apparently owing to his fondness for port wine.

He cut down a cherry tree and confessed to his father

Perhaps the best known of all the legends spun around Washington, the 'cherry tree story' first surfaced in a biography written after his death by Mason Locke Weems. Concerned with portraying Washington as an exemplary role model for his countrymen, 'Parson Weems' concocted the fable of the six-year-old hatcheting his father's prized cherry tree, and then deflecting parental wrath by frankly confessing to the deed with the words "I can't tell a lie, Pa."

Washington was a moonshiner

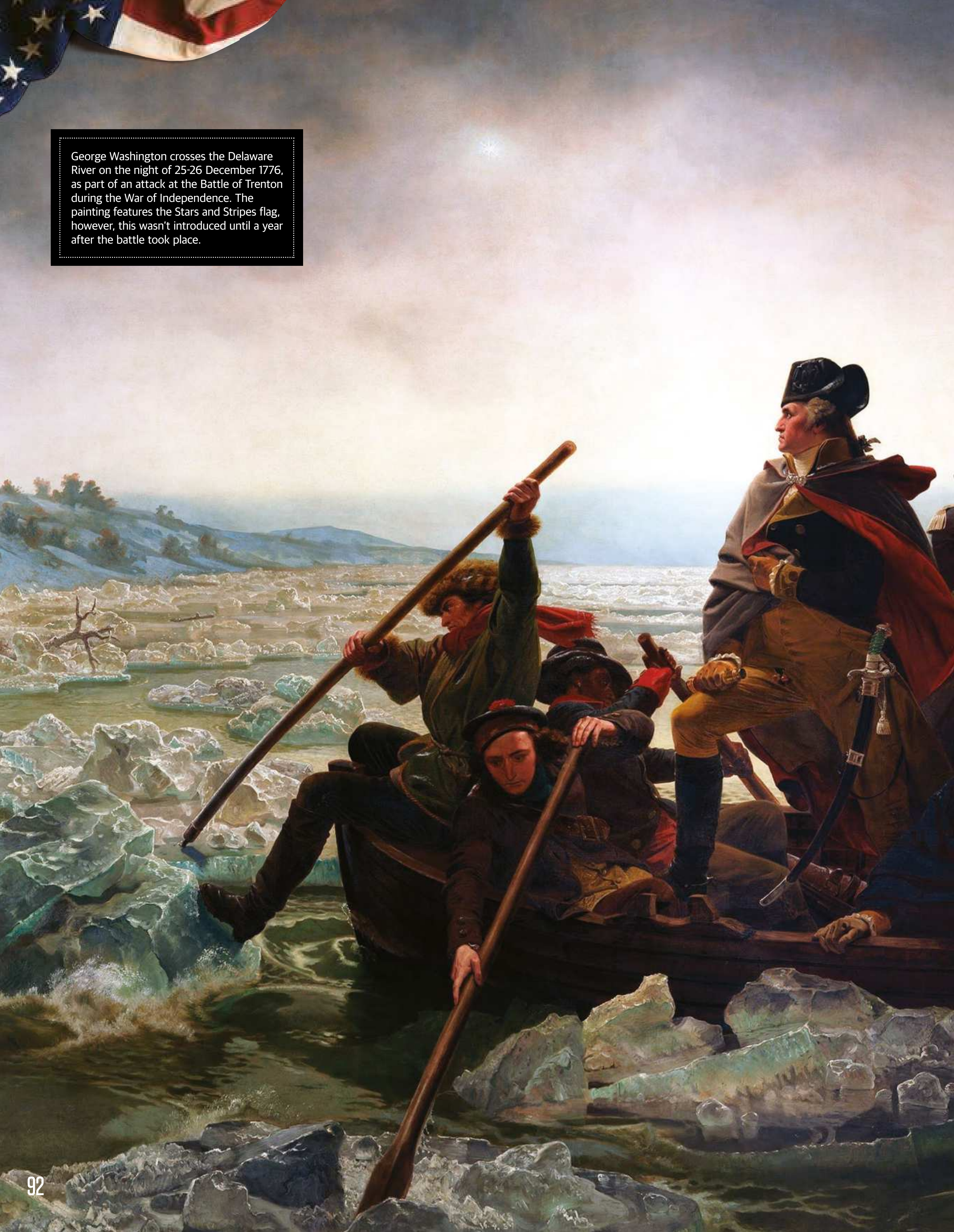
While there's no proof that Washington set up illicit liquor stills to make moonshine, he was certainly in the forefront of American whiskey production. On the advice of his Scottish farm manager, James Anderson, he established a whiskey distillery at Mount Vernon in 1797. By the year of Washington's death, 1799, this was producing almost 41,640l (11,000gal) of rye and corn whiskey, making it the largest US distillery of its day.

He threw a silver dollar across the Potomac River

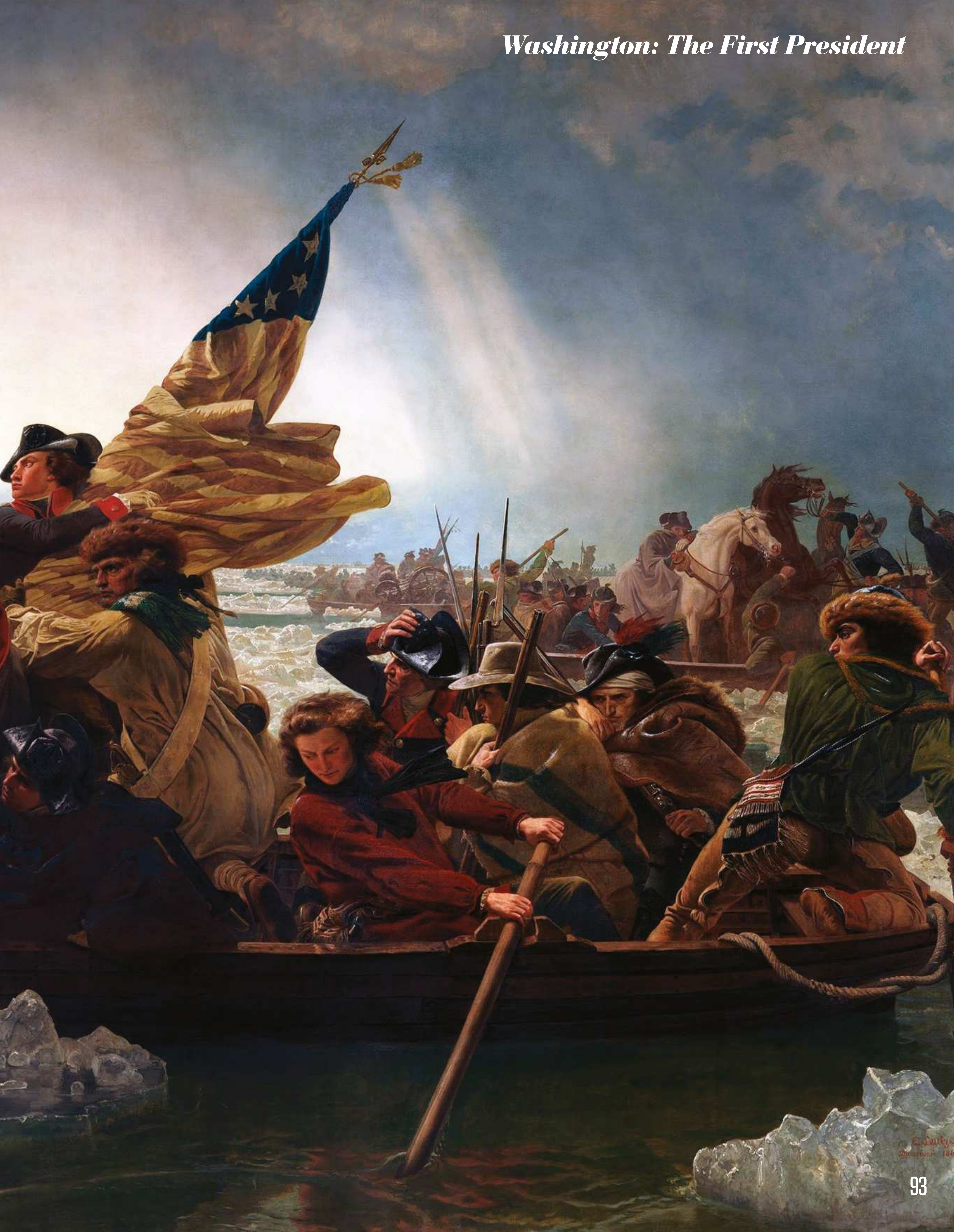
Standing 188cm (6'2") tall, and with a well-muscled physique, young George Washington was renowned for his strength. Yet even Washington in his prime would have struggled to hurl a silver dollar across the Potomac River, which is more than 1.6km (1mi) wide opposite his Virginian home at Mount Vernon. Also, silver dollars were only introduced in 1794, when Washington was already in his sixties.

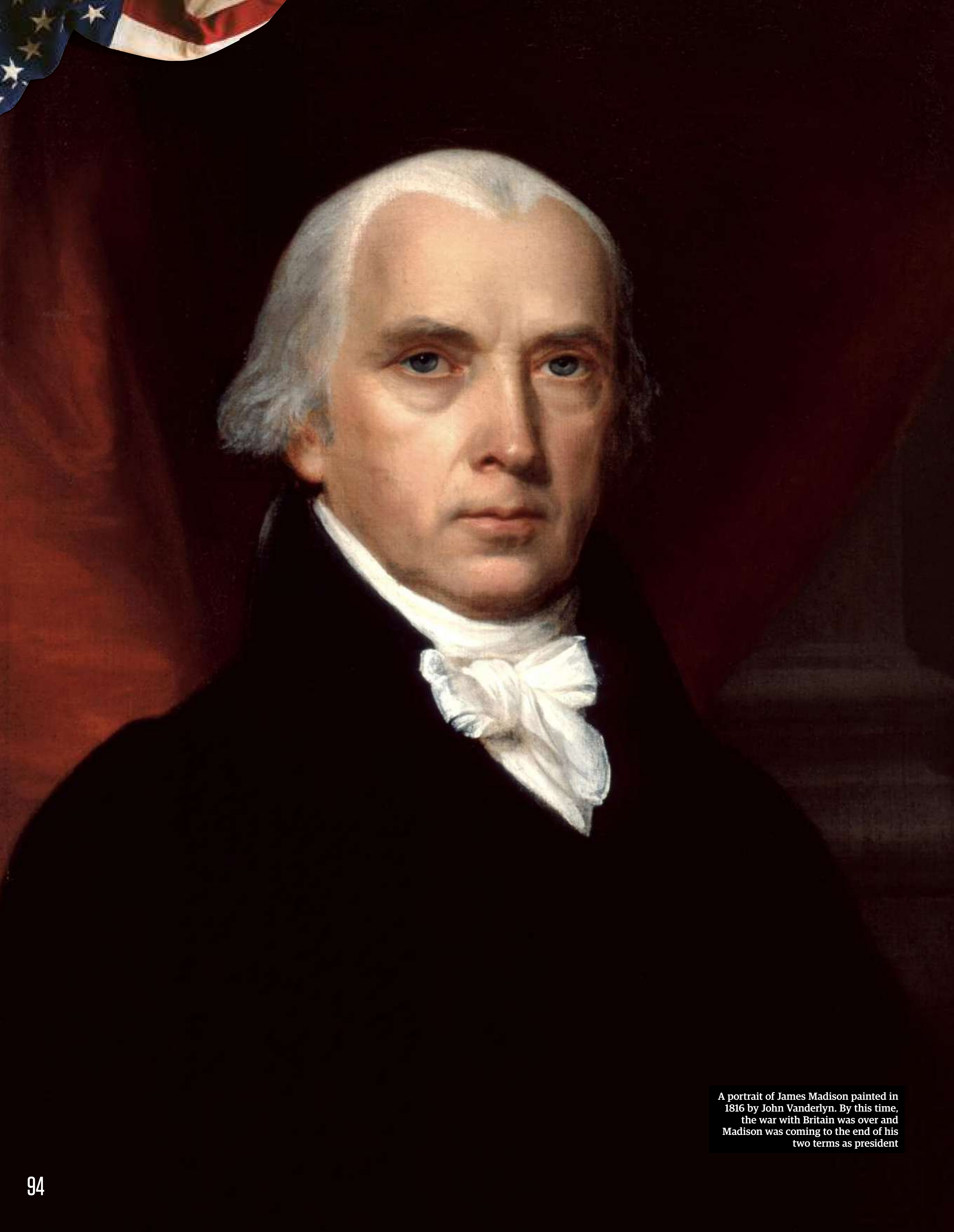
He wore a wig

Although wigs were fashionable during Washington's lifetime, he never wore one, preferring to keep his own hair, which was reddish-brown, long and tied back in a tight queue, or 'pigtail'. However, Washington regularly used the white hair powder that was customary among men of his wealthy social class, especially for formal occasions, and this gave the impression of a wig, apparent in many of his portraits.



George Washington crosses the Delaware River on the night of 25-26 December 1776, as part of an attack at the Battle of Trenton during the War of Independence. The painting features the Stars and Stripes flag, however, this wasn't introduced until a year after the battle took place.





A portrait of James Madison painted in 1816 by John Vanderlyn. By this time, the war with Britain was over and Madison was coming to the end of his two terms as president

1751-1836

A small man with big ideas

James Madison, a scholarly, shy man, developed the ideas that would form the Constitution of the United States and lead the nation into war

The last words of James Madison serve to encapsulate his life. He was 85 and had been sick for a long time, with rheumatism leaving him largely bed-ridden. However, despite his hands being reduced to claws, he still managed to write countless letters to the most prominent men of the day - many of his final epistles pondering on the growing conflict between states' rights and central government that would come to a fatal confrontation 25 years later in the American Civil War.

On Madison's final earthly day, his niece, Nelly Willis, was sitting by his bed when Madison found that he was unable to swallow his food.

"What is the matter, Uncle James?" asked Nelly.

"Nothing more than a change of mind, my dear," said Madison. Then his head dropped and, according to his niece, "He ceased breathing as quietly as the snuff of a candle goes out."

For Madison, even death was a change of mind. It was appropriate for a man and a president for whom thought - deep, prolonged, sustained thought - was the foundation to all action.

James Madison was born on 16 March 1751, 85 years before that day in June (he died on 28 June 1836, to be precise) at the Belle Grove Plantation that belonged to his mother's family near Port Conway in Virginia. The original house is long gone, but the setting, on the bank of the Rappahannock River, remains impressive. 'Rappahannock' comes from the Algonquian language and means 'river of quick, rising waters'. However, the young James spent most of his childhood on his father's plantation house in Orange, Virginia, to the west of the Belle Grove Plantation and near the Blue Ridge Mountains. One of Madison's chief childhood memories was moving from their original home there to a newly built mansion, which his father named Montpelier. After his years in public life, the old Madison would return to Montpelier and pass his letter-writing retirement there (the building has been restored to its original state and is now a national historic monument, open to the public).

It was a wealthy life. Both sides of Madison's family were rich. The Montpelier plantation was huge - over 4,000 acres - and the Madison family bought and kept about 100 slaves to work the land and run the house. James was the eldest of 12 children, of whom seven made it to adulthood. As a boy, Madison was taught by private tutors, becoming proficient in many subjects while showing particular aptitude for Latin and Greek. At 18, he enrolled at the College of New Jersey (which became Princeton College) and, after his first year, in a fit of teenage intellectual confidence, Madison persuaded the college president that he could do two years work in one; "an indiscreet experiment of the minimum of sleep and the maximum of application, which the constitution would bear," he later said. He did the work, but was so broken down by it that he had to stay an extra year in New Jersey to recover, his health being judged too delicate to withstand the long journey home.

> To general surprise, at 43 Madison married 26-year-old Dolley Payne Todd - a widow with an infant son. The marriage would prove long and happy

Cushioned by his family wealth, the young Madison returned to the family home at Montpelier in 1772 and started a desultory study of law but, in truth, he was still casting around for a purpose and a role. He started to find that purpose two years later, when he became a member of the local Committee of Safety, one of the patriotic, pre-revolution groups that recruited militias for local protection. The passage of two more years saw tensions between Britain and its colonies reach breaking point, and the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776. Madison had been part of the convention raised in Virginia that wrote the state's first constitution and that pushed the Continental Congress towards its Declaration, but he lost out in the elections to the state assembly when his opponent promised voters free whisky if he won, which Madison believed "inconsistent with the

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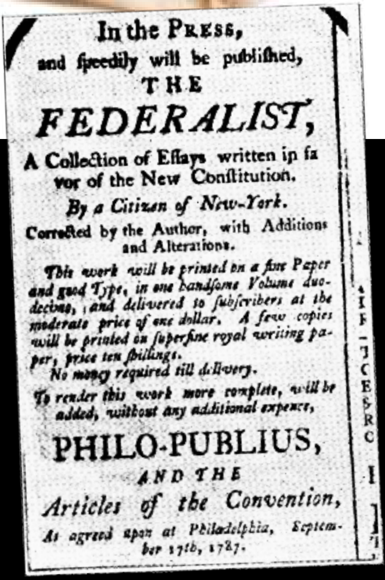


In the Press,
and ſpeedily will be publiſhed,
THE
FEDERALIST,
A Collection of Eſſays written in fa vor of the New Conſtitution.
By a Citizen of New-York.
Corrected by the Author, with Additions and Alterations.

This work will be printed on a fine Paper and good Type, in one handſome Volume duodecimo, and delivered to ſubſcribers at the moderate price of one dollar. A few copies will be printed on ſuperfine royal writing paper, price ten ſhillings.

No money required till delivery.

To render this work more complete, will be added, without any additional expence,
PHILO-PUBLIUS,
AND THE
Articles of the Convention,
As agreed upon at Philadelphia, September 17th, 1787.

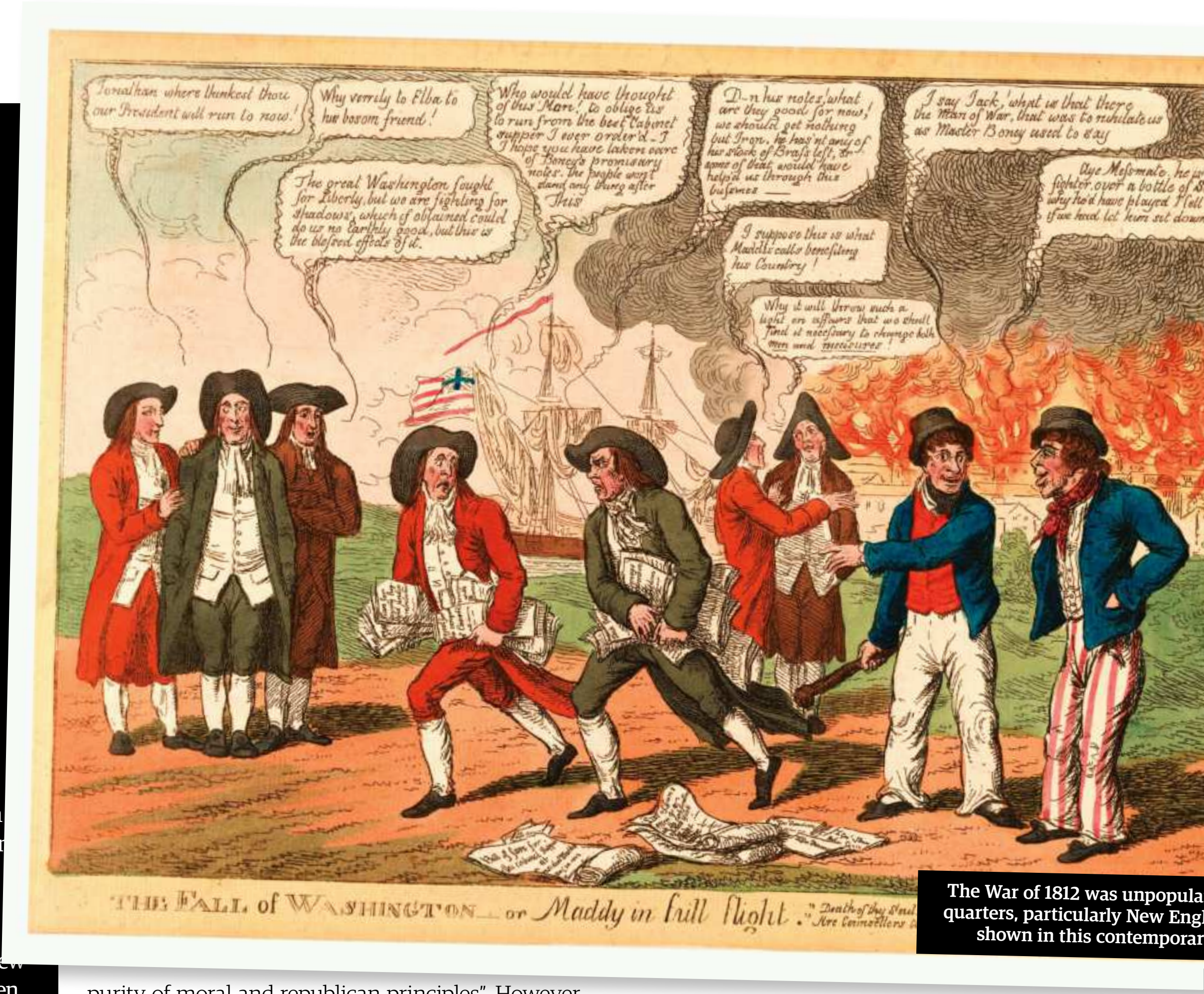
Madison and co employed all the techniques of persuasion and marketing available to them at the time to persuade the public to adopt the new constitution

Reason and politics

Having written a new constitution, its framers had to sell the document to the people and, in particular, the delegates to the state conventions that would be called to ratify it. In order to present their arguments in its favour, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay wrote a series of 77 essays for publication in New York newspapers, the essays appearing between October 1787 and May 1788. The essays, with eight more that appeared later in the press, were published as *The Federalist* on 28 May 1788 (the custom of calling them *The Federalist Papers* is a 20th-century innovation). The essays appeared under the pseudonym Publius.

Taken together, they represent the most compelling argument for the rationale behind the new constitution – and thus why it should be adopted – that was proposed following the Constitutional Convention. Working on the assumption that men, at least in the political sphere, act for their own self-interest – either individually or as part of a larger group – Madison, Hamilton and Jay argued that the new constitution would protect the country and its inhabitants by creating institutions that took account of these tendencies in people and stacked them against each other, thus producing a stable and fair form of government.

One of the key essays, 'Federalist 10', was written by Madison and in it he argued against the idea, prevalent at the time, that republican governments could only work in small states, such as the old Greek city states, where it was possible for people to have personal knowledge of all the political players. Madison argued that the opposite was true, and that a large (and America was large and getting larger all the time) state, with a varied mix of people and interests, would be more stable, as no one faction could gain a majority and impose its will upon everybody else.


Jonathan where thinkest thou our President will run to now!
Why verrily to Elba to his bosom friend!
Who would have thought of this Man! to oblige us to run from the best Cabinet supper I ever order'd. I hope you have taken care of Boney's promisary notes. the people won't stand any thing after This
The great Washington fought for Liberty, but we are fighting for shadows, which if obtained could do us no Earthly good, but this is the blessed effects of it.
D-n his notes, what are they good for now! we should get nothing but Iron. he has'nt any of his stock of Brass left, or some of that would have help'd us through this busines ___
I suppose this is what Maddis calls benefiting his Country!
Why it will throw such a light on affairs that we shall find it necessary to change both men and measures!
I say Jack, what is that there the Man of War, that was to nihilate us as Master Boney used to say
Aye Messmate, he fighter over a bottle of S why he'd have played Hell if we had let him set down
THE FALL of WASHINGTON _ or Maddy in full flight.

The War of 1812 was unpopula
quarters, particularly New Eng
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purity of moral and republican principles". However, Madison was appointed to the Virginia Council of State in 1778, where he became a friend to and ally of Thomas Jefferson – Virginia's governor during the War of Independence. This was to be the defining political relationship of his life, and one that would, perhaps more than any other, shape the future of the new republic.

In 1780, Madison was elected to the Continental Congress, the ruling body of the United States during most of the war years. He was 29 at his election; while he was the youngest member of the body, he soon won respect for his understanding of the issues it faced. He also saw, first hand, the difficulties of pulling disparate and obdurately independent states and delegates together to form the government of a single, coherent nation. This understanding deepened from 1784 onwards when Madison was back in Virginia as a member of its state legislature, his term at the Congress having reached its limit. Working in the Virginia Assembly, Madison saw how difficult it was for legislators to bear in mind the wider national interest when dealing with the demands of their constituents. These difficulties threatened to tear apart the newly born nation and, in response, Madison, Alexander Hamilton and others called for a convention to amend the Articles of Confederation that were the country's constitution.

In the end, only five states sent delegates to the Annapolis Convention in 1786 (although Madison and Hamilton were among those present), but it was becoming increasingly clear that something needed to be done to cement the confederation before it broke apart. The need was made urgent by Shays' Rebellion, an uprising in Massachussetts in 1786 and 1787 that led to the return of George Washington to national politics and the calling of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

> "Whether the states would be united or divided by the new constitution remained an open question"

This was the meeting for which James Madison had been preparing throughout his adult life. Thomas Jefferson, who had been appointed the US ambassador to France, had shipped Madison a crate load of books on history and political theory, which Madison read voraciously through the spring and summer of 1786. In particular, Madison read the history of previous confederations, and their tendency to split apart. He wrote, "When we see the same faults followed regularly by the same misfortunes, we may reasonably think that if we could have known the first, we might have avoided the others." All his reading and his experience of government convinced Madison of one thing: unless

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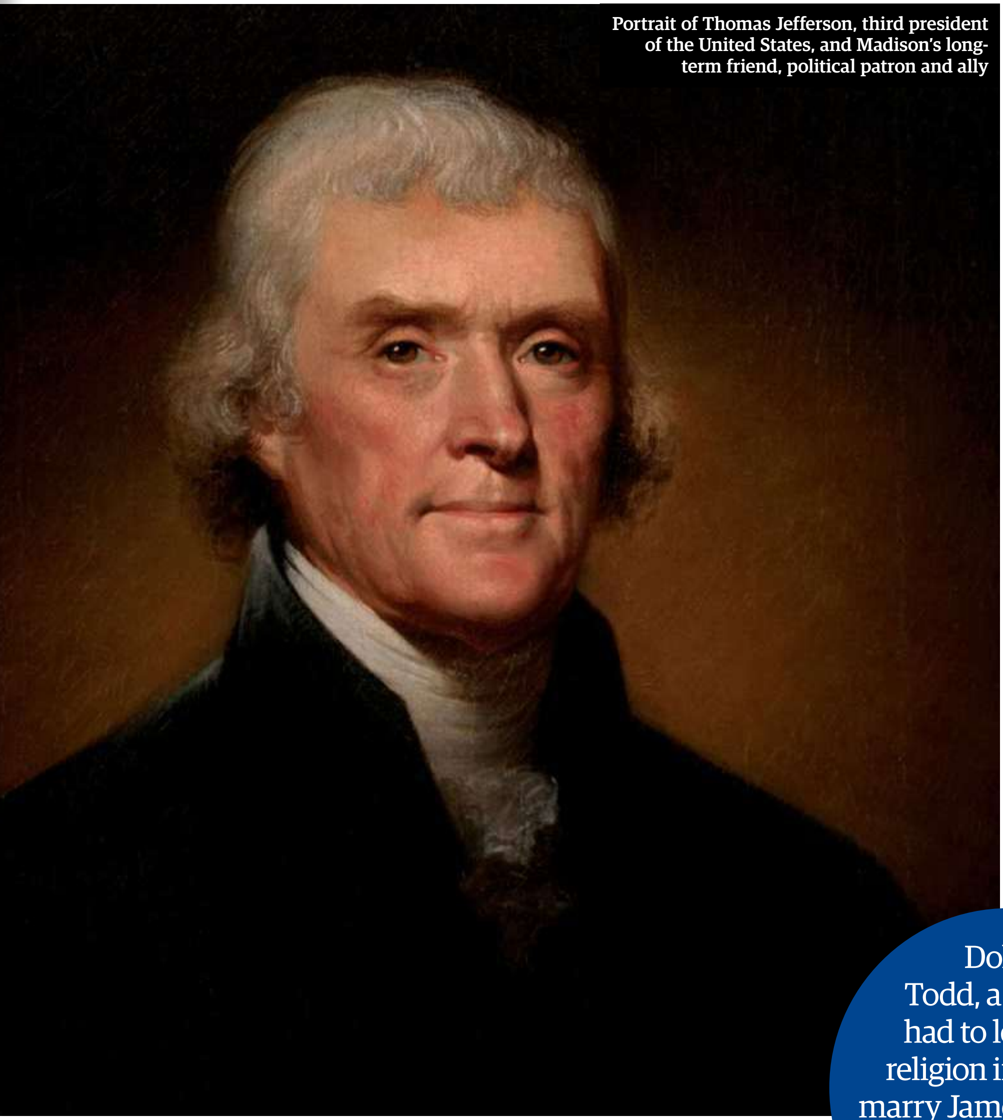
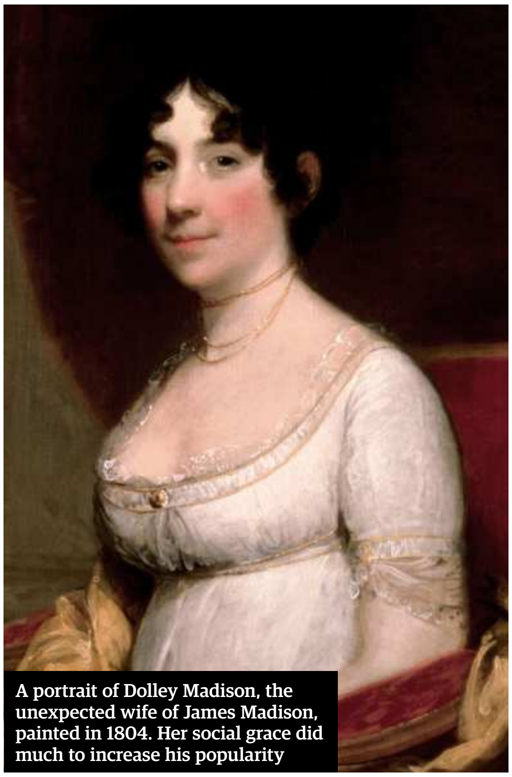

Portrait of Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, and Madison's long-term friend, political patron and ally


A portrait of Dolley Madison, the unexpected wife of James Madison, painted in 1804. Her social grace did much to increase his popularity

there is a strong, central authority, a confederacy will break asunder. This was the conviction that Madison brought with him to the Constitutional Convention when it met on 25 May 1787.

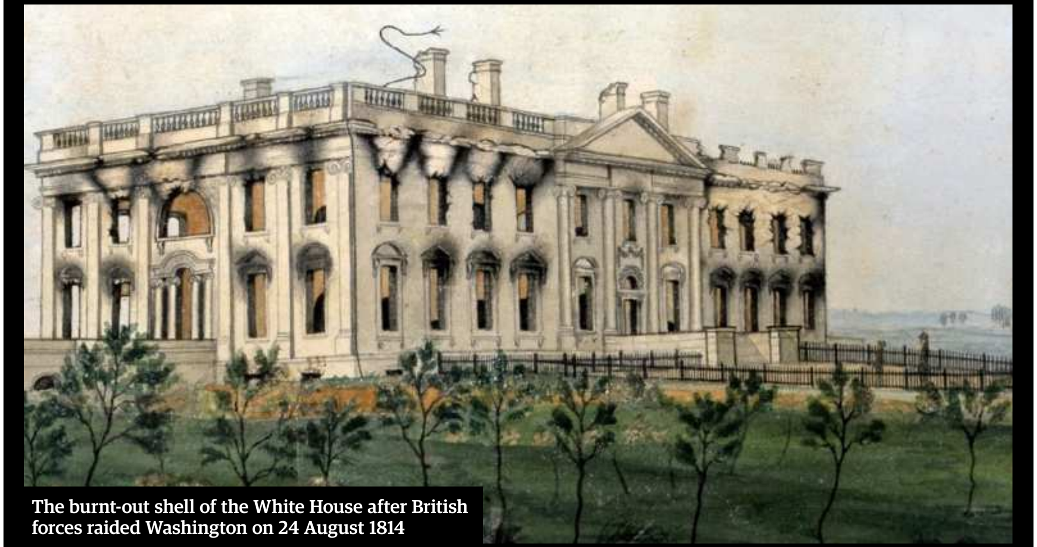
But even before the Convention began, Madison had rendered it a valuable service; he had persuaded George Washington that he must be present. With Washington as chairman, and a list of delegates that included heroes of the war for independence, judges, governors and congressmen, the Convention had the necessary authority to write a new constitution for the assembled states. But whether the states would be united or divided by the new constitution remained an open question, with many states' delegates arguing for a loose confederation with a minimum of central authority. It was here that Madison's intensive preparation really came into play. He had come to Philadelphia with a plan for a new form of government that he soon persuaded the other delegates from Virginia to adopt as their own – so much so that Virginia's governor, Edmund Randolph, presented it to the convention on 29 May as the Virginia Plan. Having such a well-worked-out plan presented to the convention just four days after it had assembled served to set the terms of debate and discussion for the next three-and-a-half months. During those months, through the heat and humidity of a Philadelphia summer, the delegates kept the windows closed so that they could not be overheard, and Madison sat at the front, through almost every hour of the proceedings, taking note of the contributions "with a labor and exactness beyond comprehension" according to Jefferson.

Dolley Todd, a Quaker, had to leave her religion in order to marry James Madison, but she remained close to her Quaker family

Benjamin Franklin – by this time the elder statesman of the new nation – had worried what the sun painted on the back of George Washington's presiding chair represented. But by the end of the convention, he had "the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun."

The Constitution the Convention proposed was based on the plan that the delegates from Virginia had proposed from the ideas Madison had suggested. It called for the division of governmental powers between an executive, a free judiciary, and a bicameral legislature, and this division of powers was based on Madison's acute observation on the nature of the men who sought political office and their reasons for doing so: "1. ambition 2. personal interest. 3. public good. Unhappily the two first are proved by experience to be most prevalent." As Madison said, "all men having power ought to be

The view of the Blue Ridge Mountains from the second floor of Montpelier. Madison would have looked out on a very similar scene



The burnt-out shell of the White House after British forces raided Washington on 24 August 1814

James Madison, war president

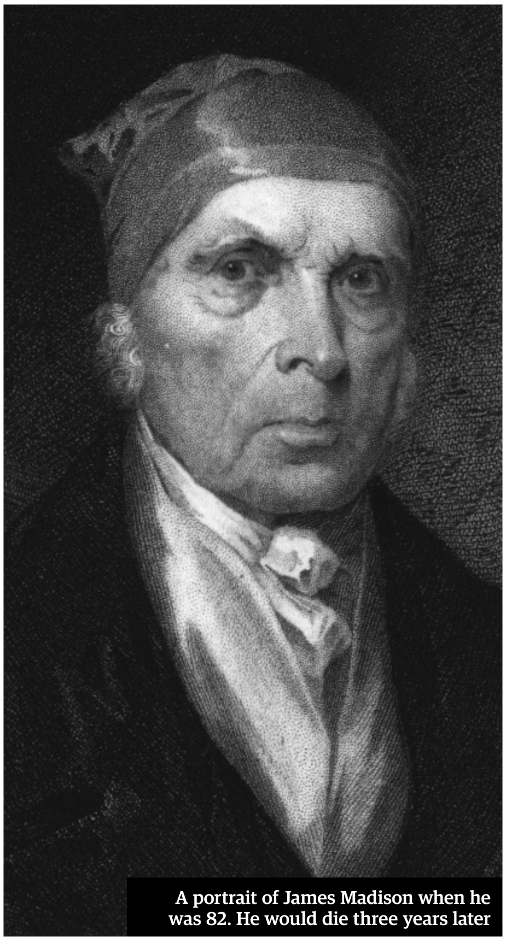
By 1812, Britain had been engaged in conflict with Revolutionary and then Napoleonic France for 19 years. In this global struggle, the United States was a sideshow for the British. However, some of the more hawkish members of Congress seized on provocations - in particular the press-ganging of Americans to serve in the British Navy - as a pretext for war and Madison, who always favoured the French cause, came to agree. What was more, many Americans thought that with Britain engaged in Europe, it would be a straightforward matter to conquer Canada and then either keep it, or use its return as a bargaining counter in eventual negotiations. On 1 June 1812, Madison asked Congress for authorisation for war and, on 4 June, Congress voted in favour. The Senate followed and on 18 June, Madison signed the declaration. The United States was now formally at war. However, the fond dreams of the hawks, that Canada would be swiftly conquered, proved illusory. In fact, through the three years of war, the British generally had the upper hand, despite their focus being on Napoleon, with mastery of the sea allowing raids deep inland, including the burning of Washington. However, late victories against the Native American allies of the British, and the defeat of a British Army attack on New Orleans, allowed the new state to believe itself victorious in what many considered a second war of independence.

distrusted to a certain degree", for "in framing a government of men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

Such was Madison's influence over the proceedings that, when a new constitution was finally agreed, he became known as 'the father of the Constitution'. The proposed new constitution envisaged a balance between the rights of the states and the federal government, but with Madison's overall plan for the structure of the new federal government in place. Madison had also succeeded in getting agreement that the constitution would be considered, and approved or rejected, by state conventions rather than the state legislatures, which he thought too wedded to their own narrow interests. But that still left the selling of the new constitution to the existing states, each suspicious of its rights. To that end, Madison, along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, wrote a series of newspaper essays that came to be called *The Federalist Papers*, explaining the theory, practice and practicalities of the new constitution. There were 85 essays and Madison wrote 29 of them.

> As wife of the US secretary of state, Dolley sometimes served as hostess at social functions, as the president, Thomas Jefferson, was a widower

At the time, Virginia was the most populous state; if it did not ratify the new constitution, then it would likely fail (and George Washington, being a Virginian, would be disbarred from being the first president). It was a close-run thing, for the state convention had many convinced anti-federalists among its delegates, and the most accomplished orator of the day, Patrick Henry, was among these staunch anti-federalists. Madison was no match for him in oratory, but his reasoned arguments won round enough delegates for the constitution to be ratified, by 89 votes to 79. The other states followed and the Constitution became the grounding of the new government,



A portrait of James Madison when he was 82. He would die three years later

Madison's family home, Montpelier, in Virginia, has been restored to the state it was in when he lived there and is now open to the public as a historic monument

We the People

Article. I

The first page of the original of the Constitution of the United States. Madison contributed more to its final form than any other man

and George Washington its first president. Madison was elected to Congress and became President Washington's chief advisor, setting the agenda for the first Congress and ensuring that Thomas Jefferson was appointed the first secretary of state. But his greatest achievement during the first Congress was his sponsorship of and guidance through its various legislative stages of a series of amendments to the Constitution that are known today as the Bill of Rights. Of the ten items in the final Bill, Madison was particularly responsible for those that guaranteed freedom of the press, jury trials and the protection of property from the government.

Dolley Madison is credited with saving the famous Lansdowne portrait of George Washington from the White House when British forces attacked Washington and burned the building down

However, Madison's relationship with Washington came under strain over what the former regarded as Washington's favouritism towards British interests over France, and it ultimately broke when Washington concluded a peace treaty with Britain. There was war between Britain and revolutionary France, and Madison favoured the French. Together with Thomas Jefferson, who had also resigned from the government, he formed the Democratic-Republicans as an opposition party. The 1796 election was hard fought, but the Federalists won and John Adams became president. Returning to Virginia, Madison worked towards the election of Thomas Jefferson next time round, and his friend duly won the 1800 election. Jefferson promptly appointed Madison secretary of state, a position he held throughout Jefferson's two terms in office. When Jefferson stood down in 1808, Madison was ideally placed to replace him and become the fourth president of the United States of America.

President Madison's time in office was dominated by the dispute with Britain that spiralled into the War of 1812. Madison had been convinced that war would produce a swift American victory by invading Canada, but that proved not to be the case, although the fledgling American navy acquitted itself well.

In a contest of fluctuating fortunes, by 1814, when Napoleon had been defeated for the first time, British forces went as far as burning down the White House and Congress in Washington. However, American forces also won victories and, by 1815, both sides were keen for a swift resolution. The Treaty of Ghent left the status quo ante largely unchanged, but the young nation took it as a victory, and its arrival on the world stage as a major power. Departing from office, Madison retired to the family home in Virginia, passing his retirement writing letters, overseeing the family plantation and helping the University of Virginia to establish itself, until ill health confined him more and more to his bed. Still active in thought and agile in conversation, he had his final change of mind on 28 June 1836.

The USA's Founding Mothers

From negotiating peace treaties to shooting at the British, these women had a unique part to play in the War of Independence

They say history is written by the winners, and the heroic victories of the American rebels against the British colonists have certainly been well documented. It was a hard won battle, and rightly holds a revered place in the story of the United States.

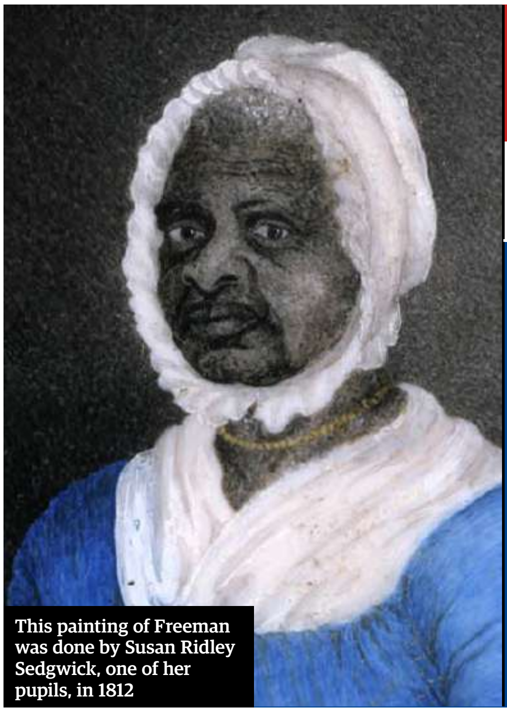
But for every great man, there is an equally great woman, whose actions to help - or hinder - the American Revolution are frequently left out of the spotlight and pages of the history books. At the time of the revolution, women were largely confined to the home, socialising with genteel company and raising children - watching the war from the sidelines. Their husbands, brothers and fathers returned with epic tales of danger and destruction.

The Declaration of Independence is telling of contemporary attitudes towards women. "All men are created equal", it says, omitting the female gender entirely. Keeping women out of politics was of paramount importance to a number of the Founding Fathers, who believed that women lacked the intelligence and integrity to conduct the serious business of government. John Adams even stated "we know better than to repeal our masculine systems", intending to keep women firmly in their place.

But finding ever more ingenious and inventive ways to ensure that their voices were heard, many women played a significant part in the revolution anyway. They boycotted British goods and taxes, or followed the army into battle as cooks, nurses and water carriers.

Some even went to exceptional lengths, and defied gender norms to show their dedication to the cause. Radical women threw themselves into politics and war, whether the Founding Fathers liked it or not. Women from across the nation - regardless of ethnicity, social status, wealth, or region - threw off their shackles, aprons and fears. In their eyes, they had important work to do, and that was gaining liberty for both themselves and the fledgling United States of America.

> "Women from across the nation threw off their shackles, aprons and fears"


This painting of Freeman was done by Susan Ridley Sedgwick, one of her pupils, in 1812

Elizabeth Freeman

c1742 - 1829

This maltreated slave used the climate of the revolution to emancipate herself from bondage

While the Founding Fathers were fighting to achieve freedom for their nation, Elizabeth Freeman (once known as Bet) was simply fighting for her own. Born into slavery in Massachusetts, the family she worked for were abusive. When they tried to attack her child with a heated shovel in 1780, Bet dived in front, receiving a deep scar to the arm. As proof of her cruel treatment, she left the wound uncovered, for all the world to see.

It's said that when she heard the words "all men are created free and equal" when the new US Constitution was being read in her master's home, Bet decided to escape slavery once and for all. With the help of Theodore Sedgwick, an abolitionist, she took her case to the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1781.

The jury ruled in Bet's favour, and her case set an important precedent - slavery was abolished in the state of Massachusetts. She also became the first woman to be emancipated there. As a symbol of her hard-won status, Bet changed her name to Elizabeth Freeman. She worked in Sedgwick's home as a governess, before buying a house for herself and her daughter, then becoming a midwife. She died a well-respected and valued pillar of her community in 1829.

Abigail was also the mother of John Quincy Adams, president of the United States from 1825-1829

Abigail Adams

1744 -1818

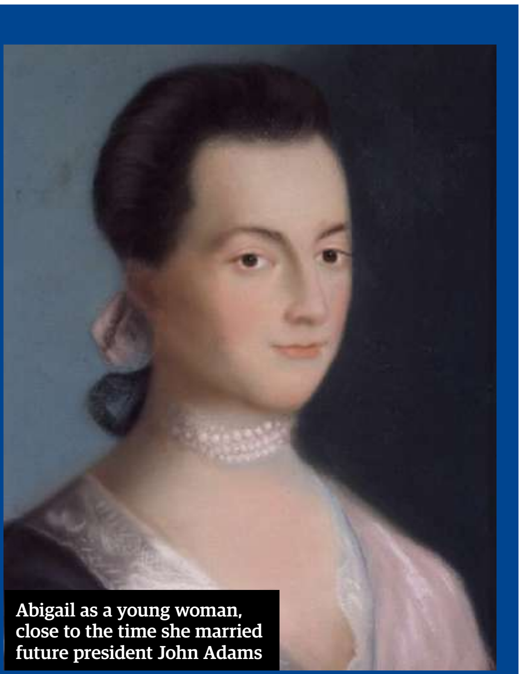
Adams was an early supporter of women's rights, and set her husband on the path to the presidency

Abigail Adams was no ordinary First Lady. A witty, wealthy and intelligent young woman, Abigail was not someone to be trifled with. When she decided to marry John Adams, a lawyer with poor prospects, that was that - regardless of what her father said.

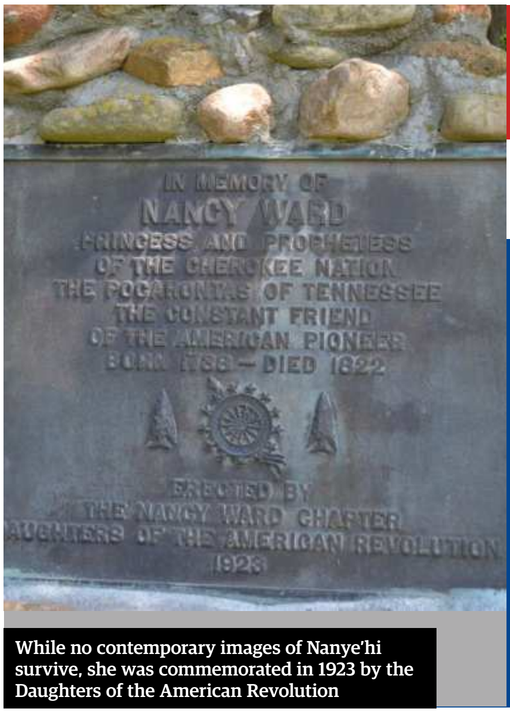
When her husband rebelled against the British, Abigail took the reins of his career, managing his finances and schedule. Her letters to him reveal her sharp mind and fervent support for the revolution. In 1776, as the Continental Congress came together, she implored him to "remember the ladies" in drafting a new Constitution. John laughed at this suggestion and dubbed female agency as the "despotism of the petticoat", but Abigail was determined.

When John was elected to the USA's highest office in 1797, she found herself in a position of unprecedented influence. Never content to simply sit pretty and look after the house, as First Lady Abigail blazed a trail for women to participate in political discussion. She championed female education and the abolition of slavery.

However, she was mocked by John's colleagues - partly because Abigail was so astute, she could see through the political manoeuvring her husband didn't, and they felt threatened. She died in 1818, leaving a legacy of fascinating letters, providing a unique female voice in the turmoil of revolution.



Abigail as a young woman, close to the time she married future president John Adams



While no contemporary images of Nanye'hi survive, she was commemorated in 1923 by the Daughters of the American Revolution

Nanye'hi (Nancy Ward)

1738 - 1822

Cherokee woman Nanye'hi was beloved by both her people and white settlers

Even while American soldiers and settlers were pillaging their land, Native Americans played a key part in the American Revolution. The names of a few men have been remembered, but the contribution Native American women offered is often lost to history.

Nanye'hi - known as Nancy Ward to English speakers - was a wise woman from the Cherokee tribe. During a battle with the Creek, her husband was killed, and she took his place in the fighting. This won her a great deal of respect, and she was able to play a role in tribal councils and decisions. As tensions between white settlers and the Cherokees reached fever pitch, Nanye'hi is said to have warned the settlers of an oncoming attack in 1776. She helped to save a white woman from being burned at the stake by fellow tribesmen, so the American militias spared her village from destruction during their fight.

When the time came to make peace with the now United States in 1785, Nanye'hi made a passionate plea for mutual friendship, negotiating the Treaty of Hopewell - one of the earliest agreements between the US and the Cherokee. However, when the US purchased the lands she lived on in 1819, Nanye'hi - now an old woman - was forced to relocate.

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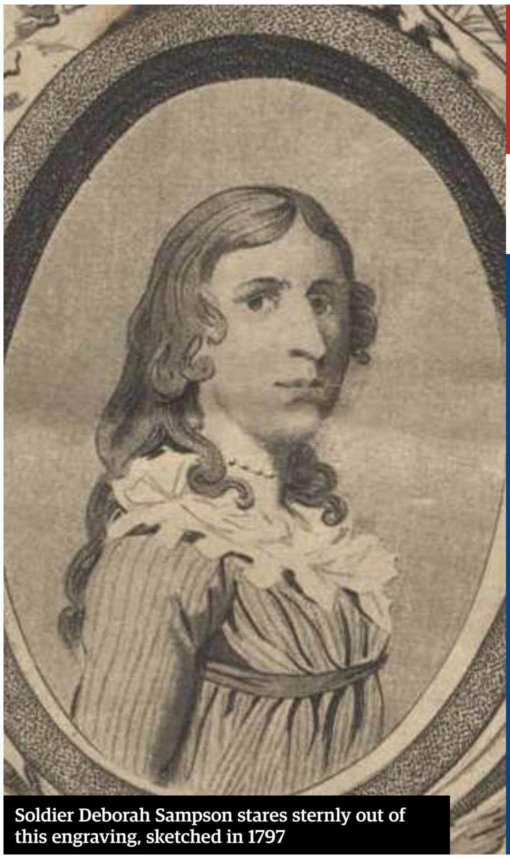


Soldier Deborah Sampson stares sternly out of this engraving, sketched in 1797

Deborah Sampson

1760 - 1827

From servant, to soldier, to speaker, Deborah Sampson had a colourful career

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Deborah Sampson was a hard-as-nails young woman, with a taste for patriotism and a bravery that took her to the front lines of the Revolutionary War.

Sampson's family was large, and her parents were destitute. Seeing no other option, they sent some of their children to work for wealthier families as indentured servants. Ten-year-old Deborah found herself on a Massachusetts farm belonging to Benjamin Thomas, and worked hard on the fields. In her down time, she would educate herself. Soon, Sampson found her tranquil life disturbed by the campaign for independence. Throwing her lot in with the revolutionaries and binding her breasts to disguise her gender, Sampson became 'Robert Shurtleff' and enlisted in the army.

'Shurtleff' excelled, and even led a raid on the house of a British supporter, capturing 15 men. Though they applauded Shurtleff's bravery, their colleagues nicknamed Shurtleff 'Molly' because of her beardless face. For almost two years, Molly fought tirelessly, her true gender undetected.

When Deborah Sampson was exposed by a visit to the military hospital, she was honourably discharged. She was granted a full military pension, and she later toured the US, giving lectures about her experiences in the army and in the Revolutionary War.

> "Sampson became 'Robert Shurtleff' and enlisted in the army"

Ann Bates

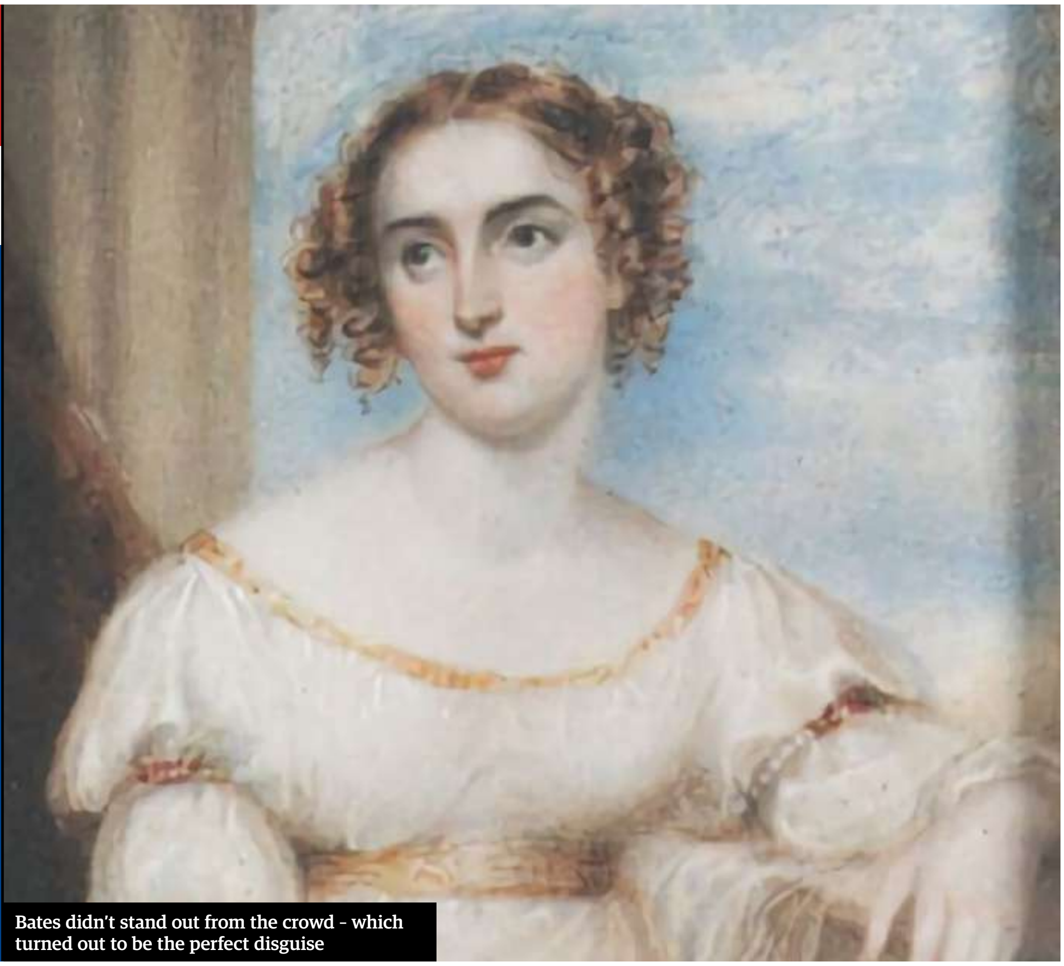
c.1748 - 1801

While the Founding Fathers fought for liberty, Ann Bates stood in their way

Not all women were fervent revolutionaries. Indeed, some of them actively worked against the rebels, and gave their service to the British. One such woman was the loyalist spy, Ann Bates.

A schoolteacher by trade, her husband fought in the British Army. When the British and their allies were forced to evacuate Philadelphia and head for New York, Ann went with them. Since women were widely assumed to know nothing of military technology and strategy, Bates had relatively easy access to crucial American information.

On her first mission, Bates dressed as a peddler and infiltrated George Washington's camp, relaying some of their military secrets - such as the number and position of cannons - back to the British Army. She deliberately kept a low profile to avoid exposure, and the tactic largely worked. In 1781, when it appeared her cause was lost, she migrated to England and lived the rest of her days in poverty.



Bates didn't stand out from the crowd - which turned out to be the perfect disguise

Ona Judge

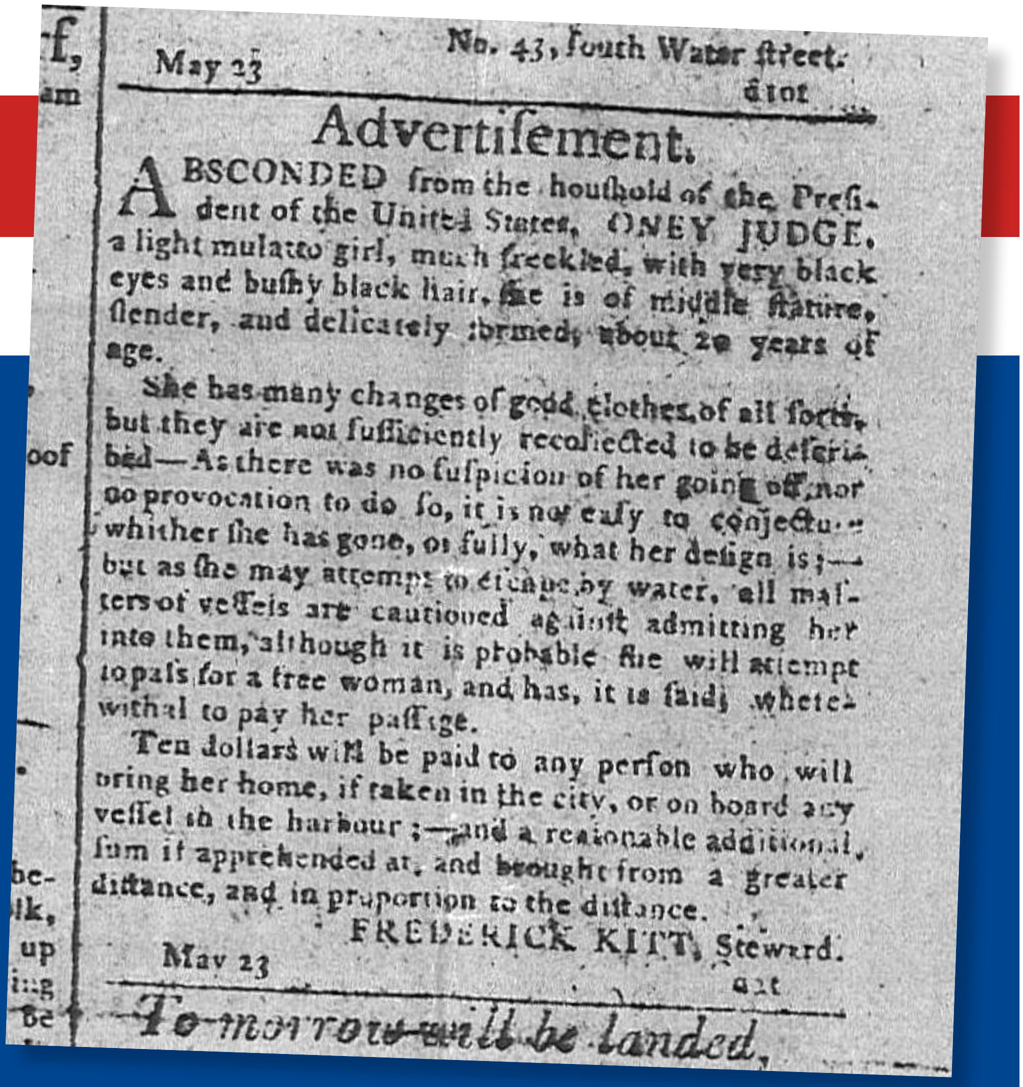
c.1773 - 1848

The woman who defied George Washington to live truly free

George Washington was notorious for his ownership of a slave plantation at Mount Vernon, but he was not nearly as effective a master as he was a president. In 1796, Ona 'Oney' Judge, a mixed race domestic slave, escaped from his clutches permanently as a fugitive. She simply walked out of the house as the family were eating dinner, never to be seen again.

Judge stepped onto a ship and sailed north to New Hampshire. Having been exposed to free black men and women, she knew that a better life might be found away from the president's home. However, the loss of a favourite slave was a humiliation Washington wasn't going to let go of easily, so Judge became a wanted fugitive.

Washington even sent assistants to convince her to return, but Judge was smarter than Washington gave her credit for. She attempted to bargain with them, and the president viewed this as the deepest insolence. She never did go back, but when she died she was still legally a slave - as were her children.



May 23 No. 43, ſouth Water ſtreet.
d10t

Advertiſement.

ABSCONDED from the houſhold of the Preſident of the United States, ONEY JUDGE, a light mulatto girl, much freckled, with very black eyes and buſhy black hair, ſhe is of middle ſtature, ſlender, and delicately formed, about 20 years of age.

She has many changes of good clothes, of all ſorts, but they are not ſufficiently recollected to be deſcribed—As there was no ſuſpicion of her going off, nor no provocation to do ſo, it is not eaſy to conjecture whither ſhe has gone, or fully, what her deſign is;—but as ſhe may attempt to eſcape by water, all maſters of veſſels are cautioned againſt admitting her into them, although it is probable ſhe will attempt to paſs for a free woman, and has, it is ſaid, wherewithal to pay her paſſage.

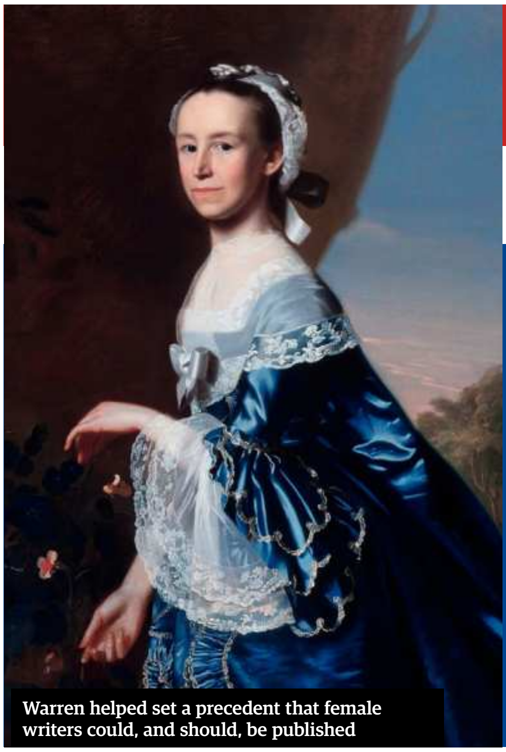
Ten dollars will be paid to any perſon who will bring her home, if taken in the city, or on board any veſſel in the harbour;—and a reaſonable additional ſum if apprehended at, and brought from a greater diſtance, and in proportion to the diſtance.

FREDERICK KITT, Steward.

May 23
42t

To-morrow will be landed,

This newspaper advert offers a hefty prize of ten dollars for returning Ona to the president



Warren helped set a precedent that female writers could, and should, be published

Mercy Otis Warren

1728 - 1814

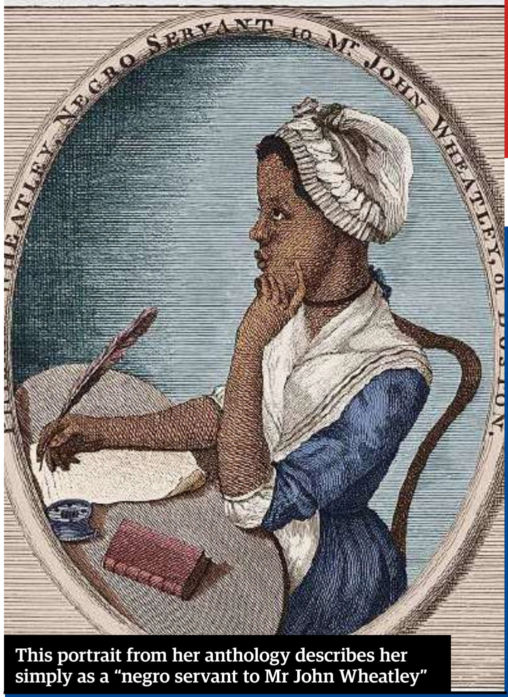
Warren's sharp wit and aptitude for politics made her a prominent chronicler of the era

Despite growing up in a well-to-do Massachusetts family, the young Mercy Otis Warren was denied the formal education given to her brothers. So, she convinced her uncle to let her sit in on their lessons. Her fascination with history and politics would soon serve her well.

After her brother was brutally beaten by British soldiers, Warren threw herself into the political sphere. Using an extensive network of contacts in the political elite, she organised protests at her home, and bore witness to some of the greatest events in American history - like the Stamp Act crisis and the Boston Tea Party.

To attract support, Warren used her keen political knowledge and skill for writing to publish satirical, pro-revolutionary columns and plays in prominent American newspapers. For instance, in 1772, her play The Adulator showcased grievances with the British government. Her witty style won her great popularity, and she counted Abigail Adams among her friends. They even exchanged letters on the nature of women's oppression, though Warren's opposition to John Adams' politics led to a fracture in their friendship.

After the revolution, Warren turned her hand to history writing, and her works have been of invaluable use ever since. Ever the firebrand, she continued her political correspondence until she died aged 86.


HEATLEY, NEGRO SERVANT to MR JOHN WHEATLEY, of BOSTON.

This portrait from her anthology describes her simply as a "negro servant to Mr John Wheatley"

Phillis Wheatley

c.1753 - 1784

The African woman whose poetry inspired Washington

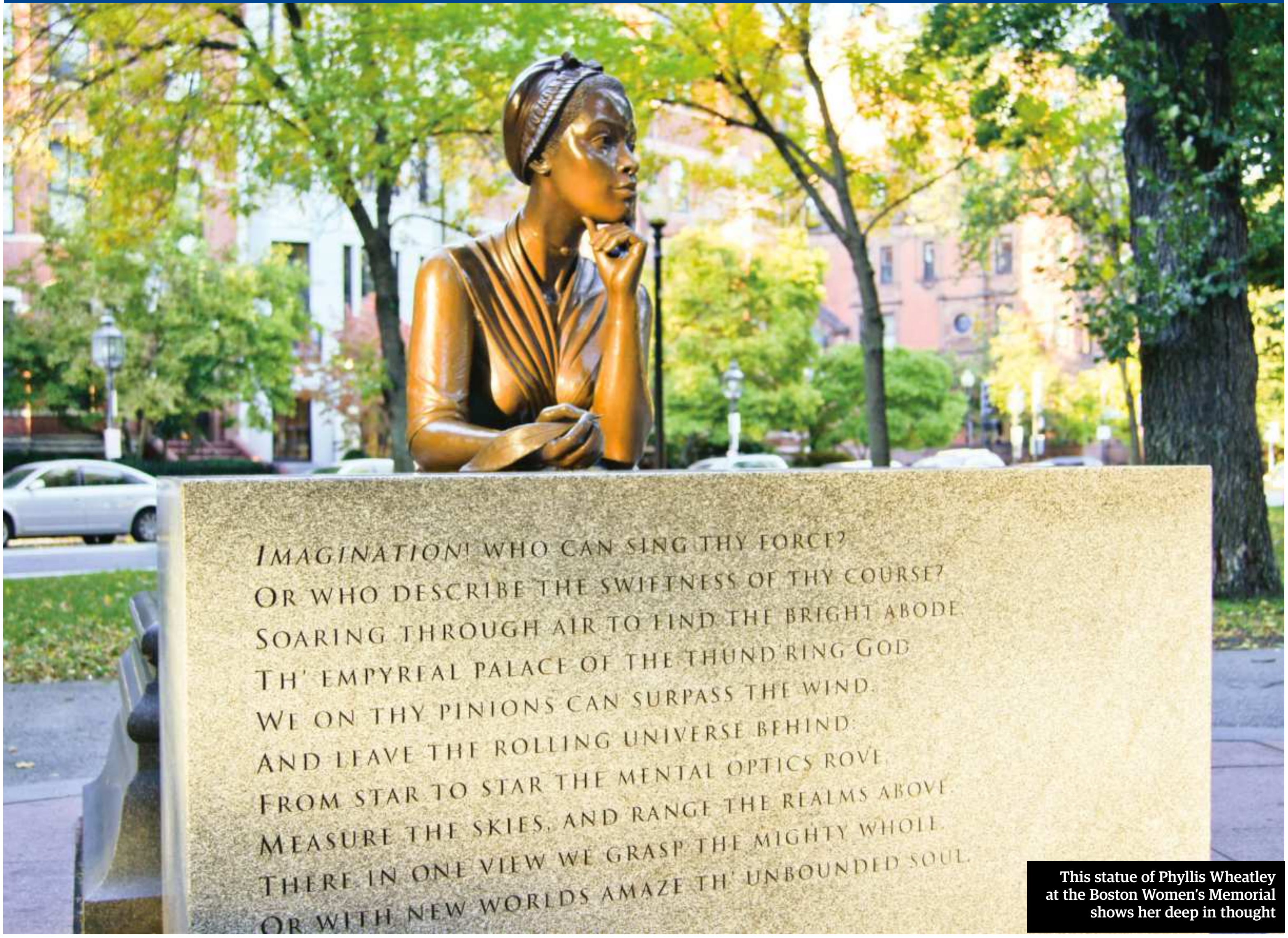
To free oneself from slavery was an incredible act of bravery by itself, but to become the US's first African American poet puts Phillis Wheatley in a league of her own.

Born in West Africa, she was kidnapped and enslaved. Bought by the tailor John Wheatley in Boston in 1761, Phillis was treated kindly by her master's family. They taught her how to read and write in English, and before long, she had mastered Greek and Latin, too.

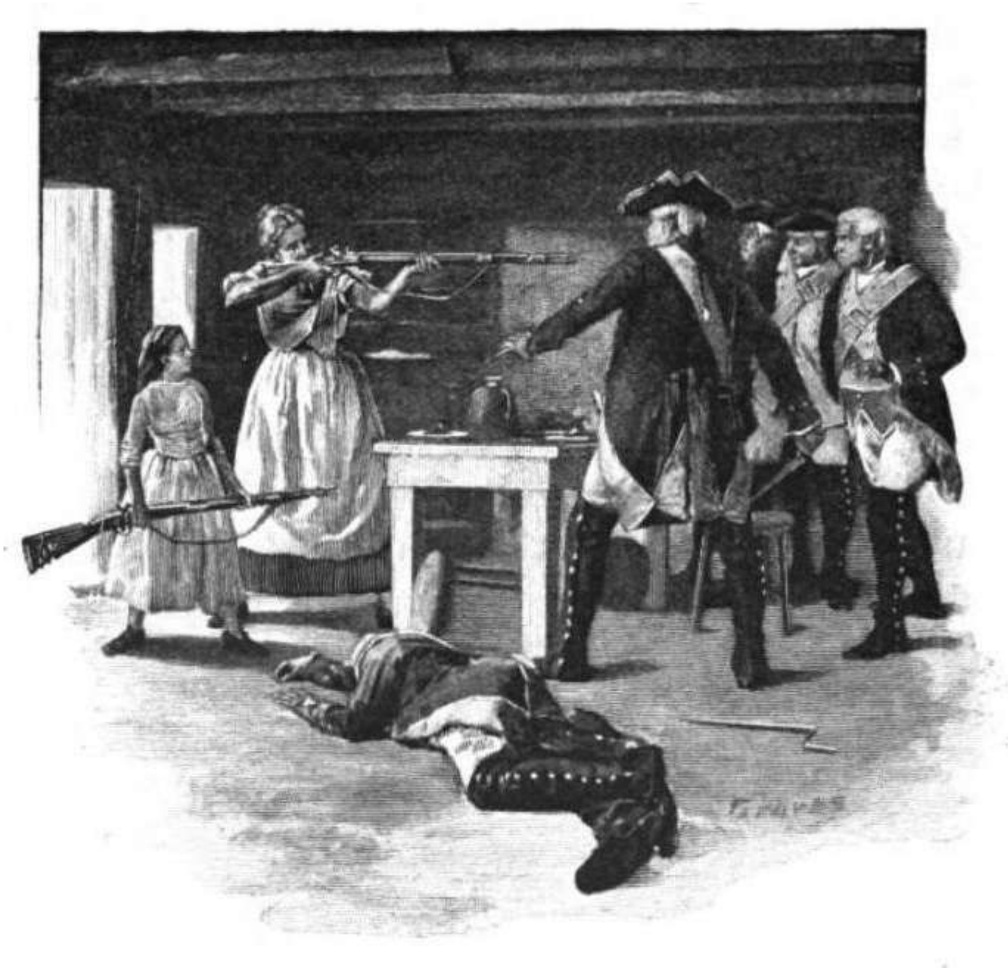
As a young woman, Wheatley was known for her translations of classic texts, and her poems about morality and liberty. In On Being Brought from Africa to America (1768), she told the story of her journey in beautiful rhyme. Wheatley was even sent to London to publish an anthology.

Her English friends implored the Wheatley family to free their brilliant slave, so as soon as Wheatley returned, she was emancipated. In 1775, she wrote To His Excellency General Washington, wishing the future President great military success. He was so pleased, he replied, inviting her to come and visit his headquarters.

Wheatley married a free black man in 1778, but he abandoned her. By the time of her death, she was once again reduced to servitude, and died a poor - but free - woman.


IMAGINATION! WHO CAN SING THY FORCE?
OR WHO DESCRIBE THE SWIFTNESS OF THY COURSE?
SOARING THROUGH AIR TO FIND THE BRIGHT ABODE,
TH' EMPYREAL PALACE OF THE THUND'RING GOD,
WE ON THY PINIONS CAN SURPASS THE WIND,
AND LEAVE THE ROLLING UNIVERSE BEHIND:
FROM STAR TO STAR THE MENTAL OPTICS ROVE,
MEASURE THE SKIES, AND RANGE THE REALMS ABOVE.
THERE IN ONE VIEW WE GRASP THE MIGHTY WHOLE,
OR WITH NEW WORLDS AMAZE TH' UNBOUNDED SOUL.

This statue of Phyllis Wheatley at the Boston Women's Memorial shows her deep in thought



Having shot one of them, Nancy Hart threatens the British home invaders with one of their own rifles

Nancy Hart

c.1735 - 1830

How this cunning 'war woman' made a fool out of British soldiers

A fanatical Whig from North Carolina, Nancy Hart would stop at nothing to rid her homeland of the rapacious British. Allegedly, she was a fiery redhead who towered over everyone at around six feet, and could handle a gun like a pro. Even the local Cherokee tribe were afraid of her, and nicknamed her 'War Woman'.

One story goes that some Tory soldiers came into Hart's home one day, and demanded this woman cook them a meal. They evidently didn't know whose threshold they had crossed, so Hart took advantage of their stupidity. She cooked them a meal and plied them with alcohol, while her daughter went out to alert the local Whigs.

Hart, meanwhile, stole some of their rifles. When they found out, they tried to attack her, but she killed one of their number and wounded another. The rest were lynched by the Whigs.

Many other legends tell of Hart's belligerency, and she remained a thorn in the side of the British until they were eventually ousted.

Margaret Corbin

1751 - 1800

After watching her husband be killed, this pioneer kept calm and carried on

Frontierswoman Margaret Corbin wasn't your average country housewife. Life for pioneers was tough away from the major towns and cities, but women were still largely kept away from the action. Some women like Corbin, however, were not afraid to get their hands a little dirty.

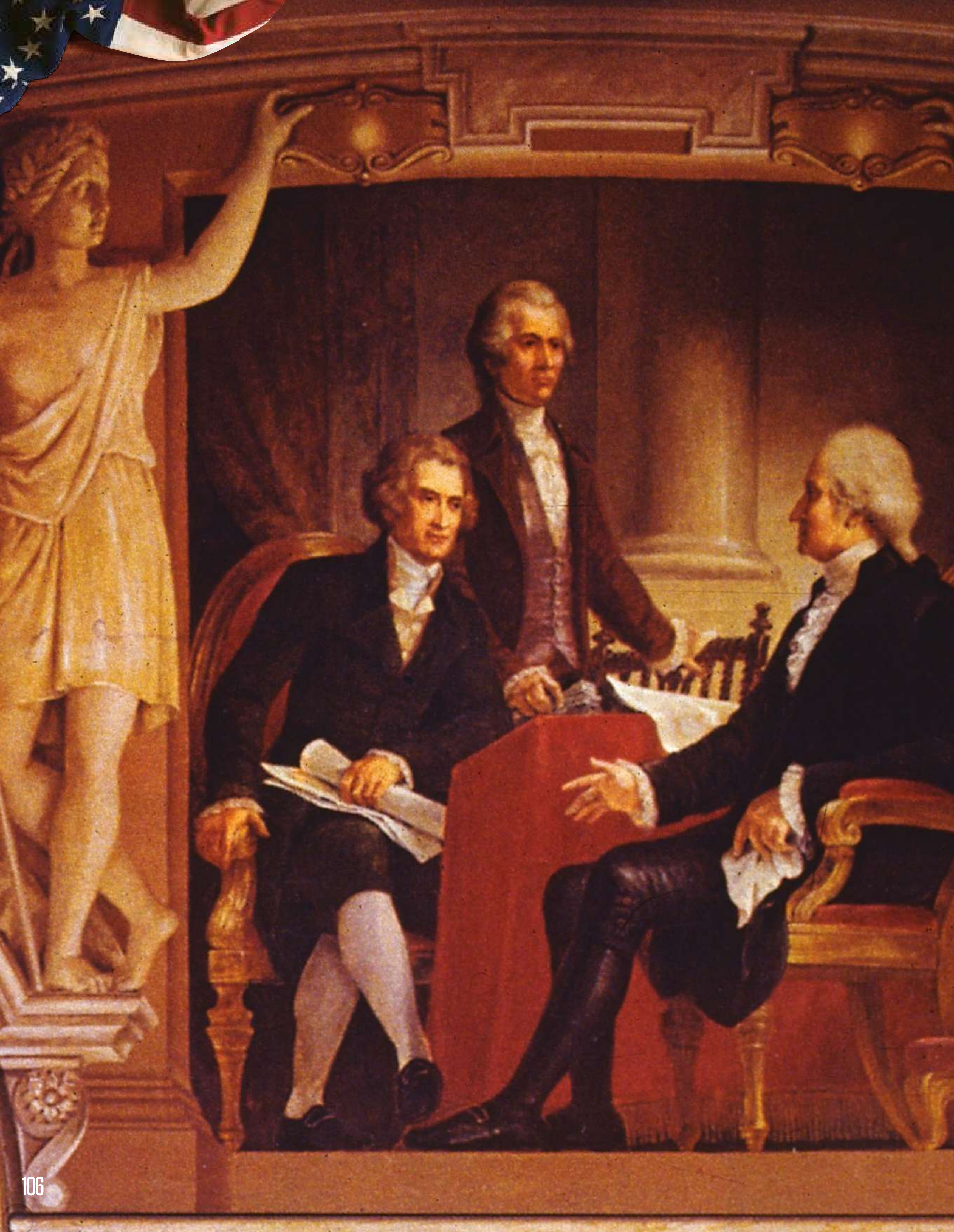
Orphaned at the age of five by a Native American raid, Corbin learned to be steady in the face of danger. So, when her husband went to join the revolutionary cause, Corbin insisted on following him.

But in 1776, the new recruit was killed during a Hessian advance. Margaret Corbin, having observed how soldiers used heavy artillery, took her dead husband's place on the cannons and fired away at the enemy. Unfortunately, she was wounded and taken as a prisoner of war.

After her release, the now disabled Corbin struggled all the way from New York to Philadelphia. She continued to assist wounded troops until the war was over. Grateful for her brave service, the Continental Congress granted her a military pension - although it amounted to only half what male combatants received.

> "Corbin wasn't afraid to get her hands dirty"

Margaret Corbin's grave at the West Point military cemetery highlights her heroism and commitment to liberty



President George Washington in discussion with his Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton

The banker and the philosopher

The clash of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, two giants of the American Revolution, reflected their differing visions for the newborn United States

The Founding Fathers of the United States of America were an extraordinary group, combining to win independence for the new nation, but often bitterly at odds with each other over the important issues of the day. These included the foreign policy of the United States, what kind of constitutional arrangement it required, the future of slavery, the economic system to be established, as well as a host of others.

Two figures loomed the largest in the debates over the future direction of the country. Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson were, in background, outlook, and political philosophy, very nearly opposites. The tension between them, both of whom served from the beginning in the cabinet of President George Washington, would go on to shape the American political system until this day.

Hamilton, together with James Madison and John Jay, wrote dozens of essays in favour of the ratification of the US Constitution under the pseudonym 'Publius'

One event illustrates well the vast differences in their outlook and temperament. In New York City, Jefferson was entertaining Hamilton for dinner, and Hamilton noticed the portraits of three men hanging on the walls of Jefferson's home. These happened to be of John Locke, the political philosopher; Isaac Newton, the scientist; and Francis Bacon, the polymath. Hamilton asked who they were. Jefferson replied that they were "the three greatest men the world ever produced". To this, Hamilton countered that the "greatest man who ever lived was Julius Caesar", the Roman politician and conqueror.

At root, the political dispute between the two men came down to a difference of just what America was supposed to be. Hamilton's America would be economically strong, humming with industry, and expanding rapidly. Such development would require the formation of large amounts of capital in the hands of a few who could then make the needed investments.

New York City itself would have a strong effect on Hamilton. The city was a beehive of commercial activity, dominated by an energetic merchant and banking class. These were the people whom Hamilton saw as the future of his new republic, and he was very comfortable with such men of wealth.

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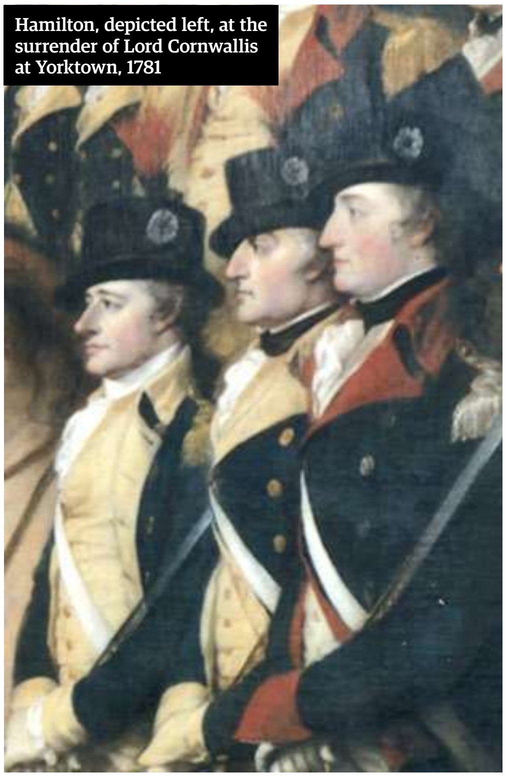
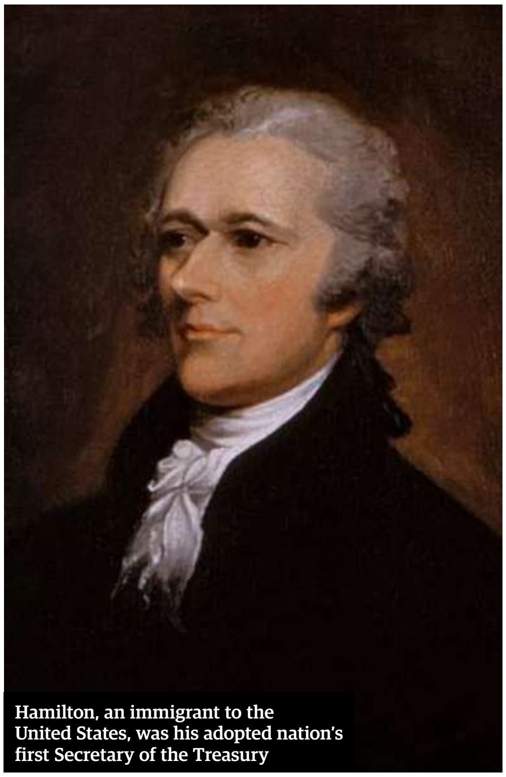
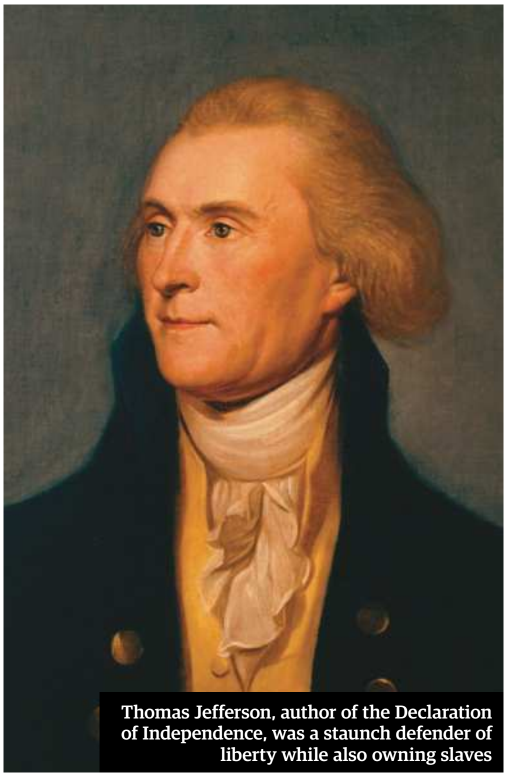


Hamilton, depicted left, at the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, 1781



Hamilton, an immigrant to the United States, was his adopted nation's first Secretary of the Treasury



Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was a staunch defender of liberty while also owning slaves

Born circa 1757 to unwed parents on the Caribbean island of Nevis, Hamilton had come to New York City in 1772 as a teenager seeking an education, entering King's College the next year. He burned with ambition; achievement would allow him to overcome the impoverished circumstances of his birth and forget the slurs against his questionable parentage. He was also a dedicated supporter of American independence. In 1775, he joined a Patriot militia in New York City and then received a commission in the Continental Army in 1776 after the War of Independence came. By 1777, he was serving on General George Washington's staff as an aide-de-camp.

Hamilton's experience of the war years would mark his outlook ever after. He had seen first-hand how the weak institutions of the new American republic had failed the soldiers in the field. The Continental Congress had proven corrupt. It had been unable to supply the Continental Army with needed supplies or create and uphold a stable currency, simply printing money with abandon. In addition, he had seen how the states had too often gone their own ways and had not contributed enough financially to achieving victory over the British, which was owed in large part to the intervention of France on the side of the rebellious colonists. He was also unhappy with ordinary Americans, whom he thought had hoarded crops and then sold them at high prices not to the army, which needed food desperately, but to merchants. Consequently, he would trust neither the Congress, nor the states, nor the citizenry, and became a champion of a strong national government.

Jefferson's background, by contrast, was far more privileged. Where Hamilton had been born poor, Jefferson, the scion of a wealthy Virginia planter, had been born in 1743 to wealth. He had entered the College of William and Mary in 1760 in Williamsburg, Virginia, and then studied law. Jefferson, with his origin in the agricultural planter class, envisioned a largely agrarian nation of yeomen farmers, self-sufficient and free. He therefore preferred that the US be overseen by a limited federal (national) government with carefully circumscribed powers to prevent its interference with the liberty of the American people.

Jefferson was the champion of the free man above all. He had gone to great lengths to secure liberty for Virginia and the United States. Assigned the task of composing the Declaration of Independence in June 1776, the document that he wrote contained, in addition to multiple complaints against King George III, an exposition on a theory of government founded upon natural rights. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," he stated, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These ideas, set forth simply, but powerfully, would encapsulate the foundational principles for the United States of America.

Hamilton served in the New York state legislature and also represented it in the Continental Congress

It is troubling then that Jefferson, the icon of liberty, was also a slaveowner. He was vulnerable, to say the least, to the charge of being a complete hypocrite in loudly proclaiming liberty for all but ignoring the existence of slavery, which he practised in his own home.

Hamilton was opposed to the institution of slavery. Never a slaveowner himself, Hamilton was a member of the New York Manumission Society, which had been founded in 1785 to work for the gradual end of slavery in the state of New York as well as the end of the slave trade there. In these objectives at least, it was successful by the turn of the 19th century.

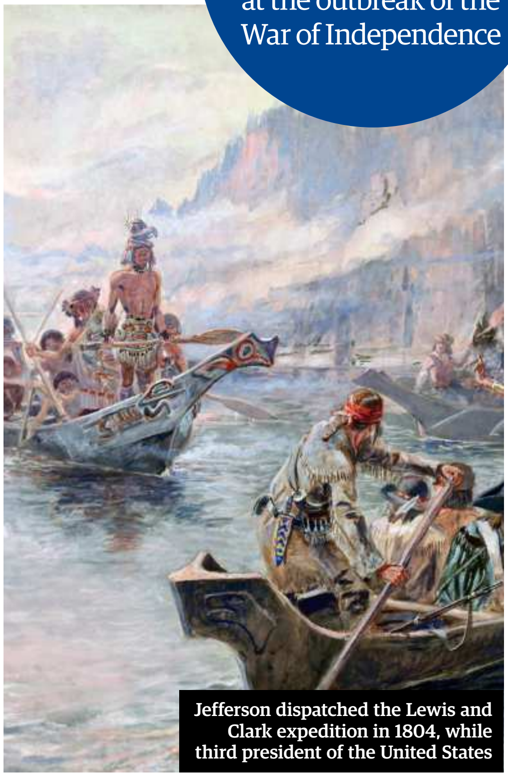
For Jefferson, slavery was a far different question. He had grown up in a family that had owned numerous slaves that worked the family plantation in Virginia. Nonetheless, he saw it as a dreadful institution and wanted it abolished, at least in theory. During the War of Independence, he hesitated to put before the Virginia legislature a bill of emancipation that had been proposed. Jefferson held many prejudices against African Americans and judged them to be an inferior race that could not live in harmony with whites. There can be little doubt that, whatever his true feelings about slavery, ending it altogether and thus freeing the slaves themselves frightened him.

Over time, he came to fear more and more what might result from the liberation of the masses of enslaved African Americans already in Virginia. Before his eyes, he had the images of the slaughter of the whites in the West Indies during the slave revolts there in the 1790s. To save Virginia, he thought that it therefore had either to maintain them in servitude or expel them from the state. Later, when he was the third president of the United States, a proposal was made in the Virginia legislature to send all freed slaves to the West where they might live on their own. Jefferson would not give the idea his support, believing that the western lands should be for whites only. Instead, he wished to eject all freed black slaves from the territory of the United States, but this was rejected as unworkable and far too expensive. Jefferson's conflicted ambivalence towards slavery, and therefore his ultimate failure to act decisively against it, is starkly shown when he wrote despairingly of it that: "We have the wolf by the ears and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go."

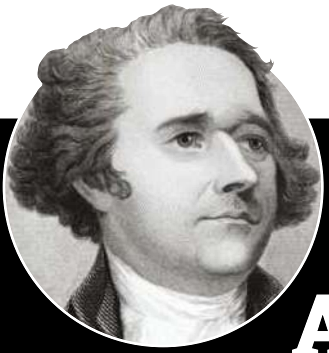
By 1783, the War of Independence was over and the United States, in the Treaty of Paris, had been recognised as an independent nation by Britain. Both Hamilton and Jefferson took up posts in George Washington's cabinet, wherein much more would come to divide them from one another. Hamilton, becoming Secretary of the Treasury in 1789, wanted to make the United States an economic powerhouse. To do this, he wanted more power for the US federal government. Jefferson, who took up the post of Secretary of State in 1790, was largely opposed to the expansion of federal power.

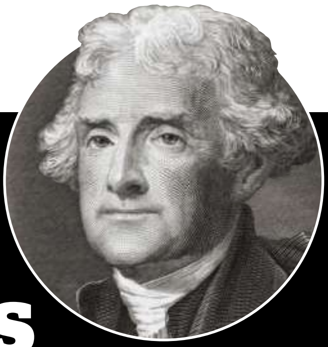
Hamilton's priority at this time was to engineer a restoration of public credit. American finances were terrible, and Hamilton, in his 1790 Report on the Public Credit, outlined proposals for fixing the nation's broken fiscal system. Debts, both among the states and the federal government, were alarmingly large. The overall total was stood at

Though Jefferson claimed to hate the institution of slavery, he owned some 200 slaves at the outbreak of the War of Independence



Jefferson dispatched the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804, while third president of the United States



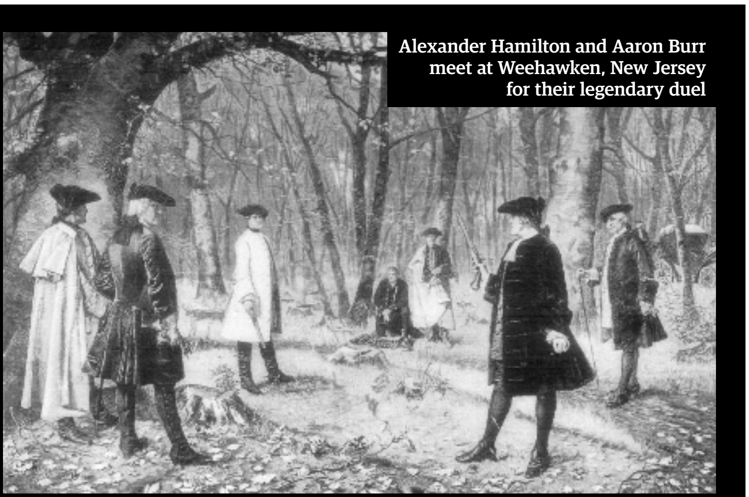


At Odds

Hamilton and Jefferson often found themselves on opposing sides on many issues

	Alexander Hamilton	**Thomas Jefferson**
Government	Hamilton insisted that the United States had to have a strong federal government that could dominate the states. He remembered bitterly the Revolutionary War in which the states had selfishly looked out for their own, parochial interests while American soldiers suffered and starved in the field.	For Jefferson, a government that governed the least governed the best. Jefferson's ideal was an America of many small and independent farmers tending their own plots and enjoying their liberty in peace. Such a nation would need little oversight from a national government.
Domestic policy	Hamilton wanted America to be strong enough to hold its own in a tough world. For that, the United States had to develop itself economically, and encourage the development of industry. A strong system of credit, backed up by a national bank, was imperative for this to come true.	Jefferson was suspicious of the business interests that Hamilton so enthusiastically championed. Jefferson's America was an agrarian one in which yeomen farmers cultivated their land without intrusion from a powerful central government.
Foreign policy	Hamilton admired Britain very much and saw its economic system as a model to be emulated by the United States. He desired good relations with the mother country, knowing that most of America's trade was with that nation and that much of the US's tax receipts came from levies on British commercial traffic.	Recalling the destruction of the British armies in the South during the Revolutionary War, Jefferson was less friendly to Britain than was Hamilton. He much preferred France, calling the Jay Treaty of 1795 with Britain "infamous" and seeing it as a sellout of America's old ally.
Slavery	Hamilton was deeply opposed to slavery and was a leader of the abolition movement in New York. He saw Jefferson as a dire hypocrite for speaking of liberty while himself owning slaves. He castigated Jefferson's plan to expel freed slaves from the United States.	Jefferson professed a disgust with slavery yet feared what might occur if the slaves were ever freed. He was the foremost champion of democratic liberty in America and yet owned many slaves.
The Constitution	Hamilton was dubious of how robust a republic might be when based upon broad-based suffrage and elections. Hamilton had even suggested to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 the possible need for a monarch to provide stability for the nation. He feared that Jefferson was too enamoured with Revolutionary France and would discard America's hard-won gains.	Jefferson had not taken part in the drafting of the US Constitution in 1787 as he was serving as the American ambassador in France. When he learned of its contents, he was worried about the presidency, which could be renewed every four years without limit. He was happier with the separation of the powers of the government between its legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

The duel in New Jersey



Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr meet at Weehawken, New Jersey for their legendary duel

Alexander Hamilton is rightly famous for many reasons, but the paramount one may be the manner of his death. Hamilton perished on 12 July 1804 as a result of wounds received in a duel with another American politician, Aaron Burr, who had served as the third vice president of the United States.

The duel, which had taken place in Weehawken, New Jersey, the day before, came about as a result of an insult that Burr believed Hamilton had made against him. In the spring of 1804, Burr was running for the governorship of the state of New York. Another man, one Dr Charles Cooper, had claimed, in a letter published in the *Albany Gazette*, that Hamilton had called Burr "despicable". Burr insisted that Hamilton either explain what he had meant or deny that he had said the enormously offensive word at all.

Hamilton refused to do either. He claimed to be unable to give a precise definition of the word or what he had meant by it. Burr was again offended and next demanded an apology for all the negative things Hamilton had said about him, ever. Hamilton now said that whatever statements he had made against Burr in the past had related only to his political beliefs and not to his personal character. Burr was still not satisfied, and insisted upon an apology for all criticisms Hamilton had ever made about either his character or his politics. When Hamilton failed to come forward with the demanded apology, Burr, on 27 June 1804, insisted upon a duel.

The two men met for the duel at Weehawken in the early morning of Wednesday 11 July, attended by their seconds. As the challengee, Hamilton was permitted to choose the weapons to be used. He chose pistols. Hamilton fired and missed, perhaps on purpose. Burr fired and hit Hamilton above his right hip, careening through his diaphragm and liver.

The wound was not immediately fatal. Hamilton was taken across the water to New York City to the home of a friend, where he died the next afternoon.

Statue of Alexander Hamilton outside the United States Treasury in Washington, DC

> "Hamilton looked to history when seeking to justify the Bank of the United States, and his role model in this matter was Great Britain itself"

$77.1 million. The portion of this owed to foreign states was $11.7 million and another $40.4 million was owed to domestic creditors. The remaining portion, $25 million, was owed by various states.

Hamilton proposed to fund the US national debt by reimbursing outstanding US securities at par, meaning the original, face value of the instrument. Many of these securities had been given long ago to American soldiers who had subsequently sold them off to other purchasers for just a sliver of what they had initially been worth.

Moreover, once word of Hamilton's proposal became known, other speculators had rushed in to buy up other securities, thinking that if they bought low now, they would sell high later. This seemingly cheated the veterans of the Revolutionary War out of what was owed them. Hamilton, preferring to see money concentrated in fewer hands, which could then invest it more readily, did not see any problem with this.

Hamilton also proposed that the federal government assume the debts – a good portion of which had been created by the war – of the states. His goal in doing this would be to consolidate the debts of 13 states into one, held by the national government, which at this time was sited in New York City. A streamlined national credit tally would simplify matters tremendously.

Objections to the assumption plan came from those states that had already paid much of their own debts, such as Virginia and most of the other Southern states. It also seemed as if the federal government, under the cloak of performing a great benefit for the states via assumption, was actually engaged in a major power grab by taking over the economies of those states. James Madison, a Virginian who was on close terms with Jefferson, led much of the resistance in Congress to Hamilton's proposals.

Jefferson had Alexander Hamilton over to dinner one Sunday evening in June 1790, along with Madison. Jefferson, who had served as the American ambassador to France during much of the 1780s, wanted to secure a compromise. He was well aware that American credit had to be improved if the US as a nation was to be thought trustworthy by European statesmen and bankers. So in this matter, Jefferson was currently aligned with Hamilton.

As part of the grand bargain that the three men made at dinner that evening, Virginia gained two things. Before the state debts would be assumed, there would be a proper accounting, or settlement, of what it would have owed as a state before the debts were taken in by the federal government so that it would not wind up owing more in subsequent taxes imposed on behalf of other, less provident states. Virginia made about $13 million as a result of this settlement. Virginia would also gain the benefit of having the new capital of the United States, the future Washington, DC, sited along the Potomac River on its border with the state of Maryland. In return, Hamilton would get his programme for restoring the national credit through Congress.

Hamilton's vision was larger still. His programme of economic development for the nation included the establishment of a 'Bank of the United States' to be chartered in Philadelphia and capitalised with ten million dollars, a sum five times larger than all the money in the three banks then existing in the country. Twenty per cent of this capital would come directly from the US federal government, with the rest raised via the sale of bank stock.

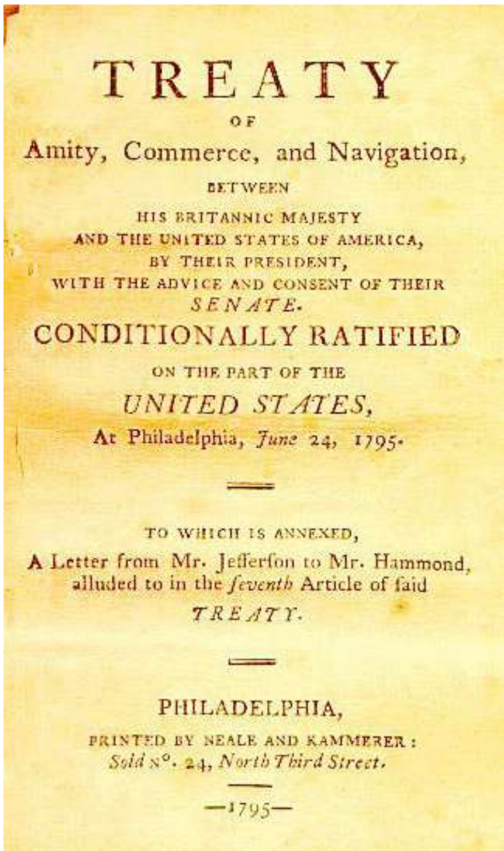
Hamilton saw Britain, which accounted for close to half of America's exports, as the better trading partner than France, which many other Americans favoured

The bank would be under private management, but the federal government would deposit its money there, which would enable the bank to issue notes that could then be used as money. By increasing the money supply in the nation, the economy would be stimulated.

The bank would also have the power to make loans which would further aid national economic growth. This new bank would be a credible institution, something Hamilton saw as imperative in America, where trust in the stability of banks was very low. A solid national bank would help to put the private credit in the country on a firm foundation.

Hamilton looked to history when seeking to justify the Bank of the United States, and his role model in this matter was Great Britain itself. Though a much smaller state than France, with only about one-third its population, Britain had built a richer and larger empire than had France. It had done this because it had more money to spend. This bounty derived largely, Hamilton believed, from England's ability, through its possession of a central bank, a funded debt, and a market for the sale of securities, to gather its money together in sufficient quantity. Better, this had been achieved without having to overtax the kingdom's subjects into penury.

Such a bank would be of little use to the small farmers who populated much of America in 1790. Rather, it would serve to elevate the urban monied classes. Jefferson looked on the proposed Bank of the United States with deep suspicion, seeing it as an attempt to recreate the America of



TREATY

OF

Amity, Commerce, and Navigation,

BETWEEN

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
BY THEIR PRESIDENT,
WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THEIR
SENATE.

CONDITIONALLY RATIFIED

ON THE PART OF THE
UNITED STATES,
At Philadelphia, *June* 24, 1795.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,
A Letter from Mr. Jefferſon to Mr. Hammond,
alluded to in the *ſeventh* Article of ſaid
TREATY.

PHILADELPHIA,

PRINTED BY NEALE AND KAMMERER:
Sold N°. 24, North Third Street.

—1795—

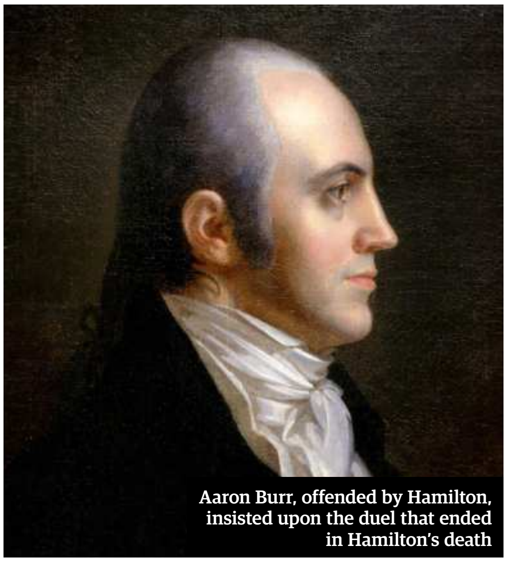
The Jay Treaty with Great Britain, which Hamilton supported despite its unpopularity in the United States

The First Bank of the United States, established at Hamilton's insistence

IN CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

The Declaration of Independence, written primarily by Jefferson in 1776



Aaron Burr, offended by Hamilton, insisted upon the duel that ended in Hamilton's death

"Though the country eventually became the economic powerhouse Hamilton envisioned, it also retained a strong commitment to individual liberty as Jefferson intended"

the Revolution as another England. Something much like that was Hamilton's goal: a prosperous, economically powerful United States that could afford to defend itself. This would require the concentration of capital so that it could be used to the benefit of the republic.

Jefferson saw this programme as confirmation of his fears that the Anglophile Hamilton was aiming towards a very different vision of America than his own, in which federal government waxed in power while liberty lost ground before its waxing might. The bank would, Jefferson also suspected, underpin the rise of a speculator class and become a vehicle for delivering bribes to the US Congress. The US Executive, with control over the bank as well as over patronage, might one day, Jefferson warned, acquire a "kingly authority". To Jefferson, the bank, together with other elements of Hamilton's economic program, was a hazardous step towards a highly stratified society in which a few were rich and the many were poor.

After the Bank Bill chartering the bank passed Congress with ease, George Washington asked both Jefferson and Hamilton to submit briefs for and against the bank. Jefferson hurriedly wrote his in a mere hours and gave it to the president, who then handed it off to Hamilton. Hamilton then spent several days crafting his own, much lengthier opinion replying to Jefferson's, and delivered it to Washington. Jefferson was shocked and dismayed when President Washington signed the bill authorising the bank into law in February 1791.

The Secretary of State was thoroughly disenchanted with the notion of further compromises with Hamilton, whose own national vision could not inhabit the same country that Jefferson desired to see flower. They clashed also over trade. Now that the federal government would need large amounts of money to pay the debts that had been assumed, no punitive measures could easily be taken against British commerce, since British ships, arriving in American ports, were the source of the majority of taxes taken in by it. When Jefferson made proposals to Congress to place discriminatory tariffs on British commerce, Hamilton, who wanted to see no impediments of any kind levied on Britain because it would stifle this important revenue stream, saw to it that they were defeated.

Jefferson began to form, while still within Washington's cabinet, a party of opposition, which effectively meant a party opposing Hamilton. Thus was born the Democratic-Republican Party. It was filled mainly by those, North and South, who were unhappy with the direction of the nation. He also started a national newspaper for his party, the *National Gazette*, in 1791. Political factionalism had long been disapproved of in America, but with the War of Independence over, the ideological differences among the revolutionary generation

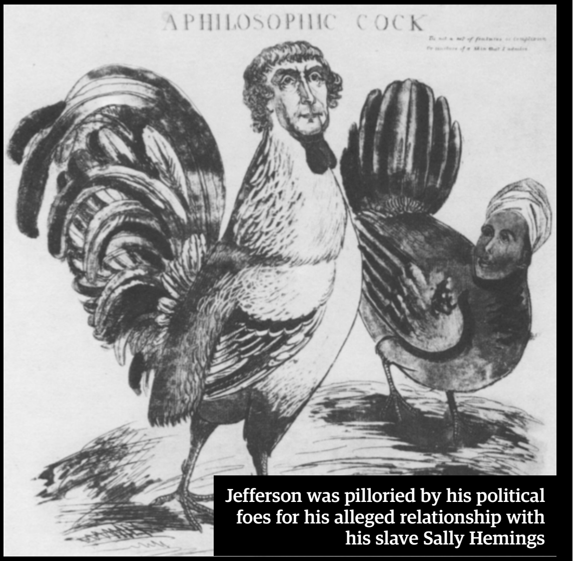
Sally Hemings

Hamilton was deeply critical of Jefferson's desire to expel freed African slaves to colonies outside of the United States, which he saw as being just as awful as slavery itself. To Hamilton, Jefferson had no grounds to his claim of his being a moral philosopher while he was also an inveterate racist.

Jefferson, Hamilton argued, was intent on preventing race mixing but, and he made this observation very elliptically, was himself having sexual relations with one of his slaves, a young woman named Sally Hemings.

Hemings, a woman of mixed ancestry and half-sister to Jefferson's wife, Martha, had accompanied Jefferson to France where he served for several years in the 1780s as the US ambassador. Hemings could have gained her freedom in France, where slaves were allowed to petition for it. Her master could not have prevented her from doing so. When Jefferson was ready to go back to the United States, he wanted Hemings to return with him. She would not hear of it. She had adapted well to her life of freedom in France. To return to America meant a return to slavery. She was also pregnant at this time by Jefferson, and that would mean her child would also be a slave.

Jefferson convinced her to go to Virginia with him only after promising that all of her children by him would be emancipated at the age of 21. Hemings relented and followed Jefferson across the Atlantic. They would have four children together who reached adulthood. All were freed as Hemings had insisted and Jefferson had agreed. She, however, remained enslaved in Jefferson's house until his death.



Jefferson was pilloried by his political foes for his alleged relationship with his slave Sally Hemings

Hamilton's portrait adorns the US $10 bill

were hardening into permanent divisions. The *National Gazette* had as its main target the so-called Federalist Party, which had informally coalesced around Alexander Hamilton in 1789.

The two men competed fiercely for Washington's ear, with the president leaning ever more towards Hamilton as the years passed. Though a Virginian and a slaveowner like Jefferson, Washington's vision for America was much more in line with those of the New Yorker, Hamilton. Jefferson was disturbed also by what appeared to be an almost monarchical cult forming around the much-revered Washington. Jefferson's first-hand view of the authoritarian royal government of France obtained while he was there as ambassador made him a committed republican, and this pushed him away from both Hamilton as well as Washington.

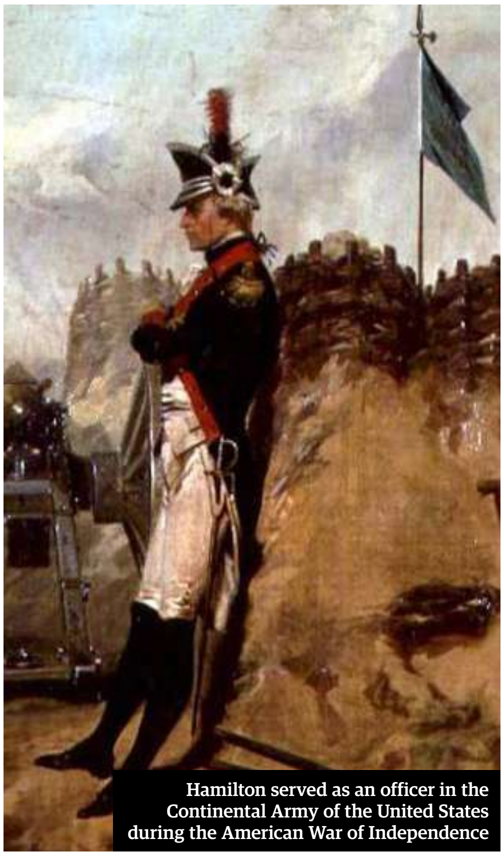
Foreign policy also divided the two men. The 1795 Jay Treaty, concluded with Britain by John Jay, Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, was hugely controversial. Jay was burned in effigy across America when its terms were heard. Hamilton, having now retired from government, supported the treaty on pragmatic grounds. The Jay Treaty provided that the British would evacuate the posts that they held in the American Northwest, something they had failed to do as they had agreed in the 1783 Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolutionary War. It also secured limited American shipping access to British Caribbean ports, while the Americans pledged to repay the pre-war debts they owed to British creditors.

Hamilton was pelted with stones in New York City when he spoke in its favour. Jefferson, also now retired, took a much different view, seeing it as a betrayal of France, which at this time was in the midst of its own revolution. He urged the House of Representatives to block the treaty on the grounds that it could withhold the funds needed to execute the treaty. Hamilton, in the meanwhile, busied himself in writing essays in support of the treaty. Jefferson's bid to quash the agreement failed and the Jay Treaty was ratified.

During the War of Independence, British soldiers occupied Jefferson's home and are said to have drunk a toast with Jefferson's wine in honour of George III's birthday

During the presidency of John Adams, the second president of the United States, Hamilton and Jefferson would be divided over the Alien and Sedition Acts. Fearing the presence of large numbers of foreigners in the country, and beset by hostilities with Revolutionary France, in 1799 the Federalist-dominated Congress passed legislation that extended the period of time in which an immigrant had to wait to become naturalised, and also authorised the deportation of foreigners. Jefferson called the acts "detestable" and saw them as being more appropriate to the Middle Ages. The Sedition Act made it illegal to say or print anything "scandalous" or "malicious" about the United States government. Jefferson saw this as a terrible blow to American liberty and thought it was thoroughly unconstitutional. Hamilton, on the other hand, came out in support of the acts, though he did so without much enthusiasm.

In 1800, Jefferson would be elected the third president of the United States. Hamilton would not attend his inauguration in Washington, DC. Hamilton by this juncture was mostly absent from national politics. In 1801, he helped found the *New-York Evening Post*, but his political career was moribund. In 1804, he fought a tragic duel with Aaron Burr, the former vice president under Jefferson, and was killed. Jefferson himself would survive until 1826.



Hamilton served as an officer in the Continental Army of the United States during the American War of Independence

The philosophical antagonism that were embodied in these men – a limited government versus a strong, centralised government – resonates still in the politics of the modern United States. Though the country eventually became the economic powerhouse Hamilton envisioned, it also retained a strong commitment to individual liberty as Jefferson intended.

1706-1790

Benjamin Franklin: Grandfather of the United States

The American Renaissance man lived a full life before he even became a revolutionary

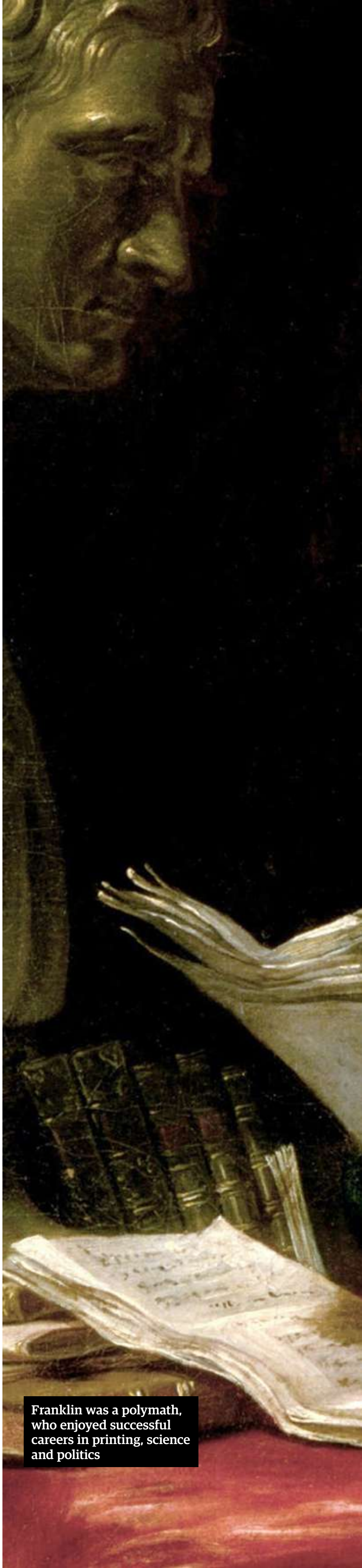
While we call the leaders of the American Revolution 'Founding Fathers', don't let those powered wigs fool you. Marquis de Lafayette and James Monroe were both only 18 years old on 4 July 1776, the day independence was declared. Alexander Hamilton was 21, James Madison was 25 and Thomas Jefferson, 33. John Adams, George Washington and Samuel Adams were 40, 44 and 53, respectively. 70-year-old Benjamin Franklin was the eldest by a wide margin. Franklin was a full two generations removed from Madison and Hamilton, but he lived a full life that could easily accommodate two more people. Self-made media tycoon, pioneering scientist, globe-trotting statesman; Franklin was all this and more, making him one of the most fascinating figures of the American Revolution.

Benjamin Franklin was born on 17 January 1706 in colonial Boston. While he learnt to read at an early age, Franklin's formal education was limited and ended when he was ten. He worked with his chandler father making candles and soap, before becoming an indentured apprentice to his brother James, a printer. What little money he earned during this time was spent on books, which he fervently devoured, and he taught himself to write effectively. In 1722, the brothers quarrelled and Franklin ran away. He enjoyed adventures in New York City and London, but made his home in Philadelphia.

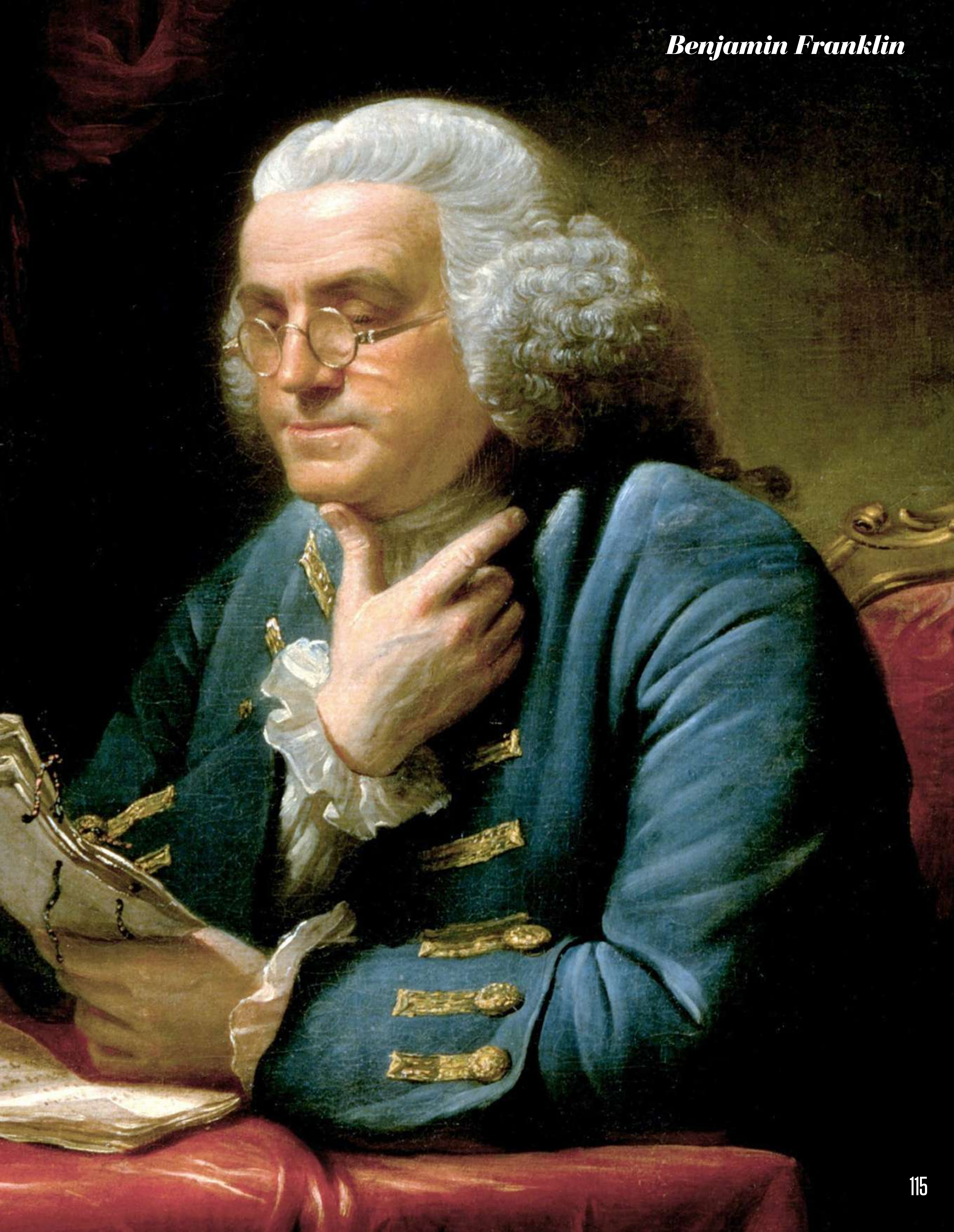
Franklin made eight voyages across the Atlantic Ocean and was the first to map the Gulf Stream

In 1728, aged 20, he set up a printers in partnership with a friend, Hugh Meredith. They landed the contract to produce Pennsylvania's paper currency, so were soon literally printing money. Their next moneymaking venture was to buy a newspaper, which they renamed *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. While it principally ran classified ads - such as employment notices and items for sales - Franklin often contributed editorial under various aliases. From 1732 to 1757, Franklin also produced *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which sold very well for a pamphlet published in the American colonies, with print runs reaching 10,000 a year.

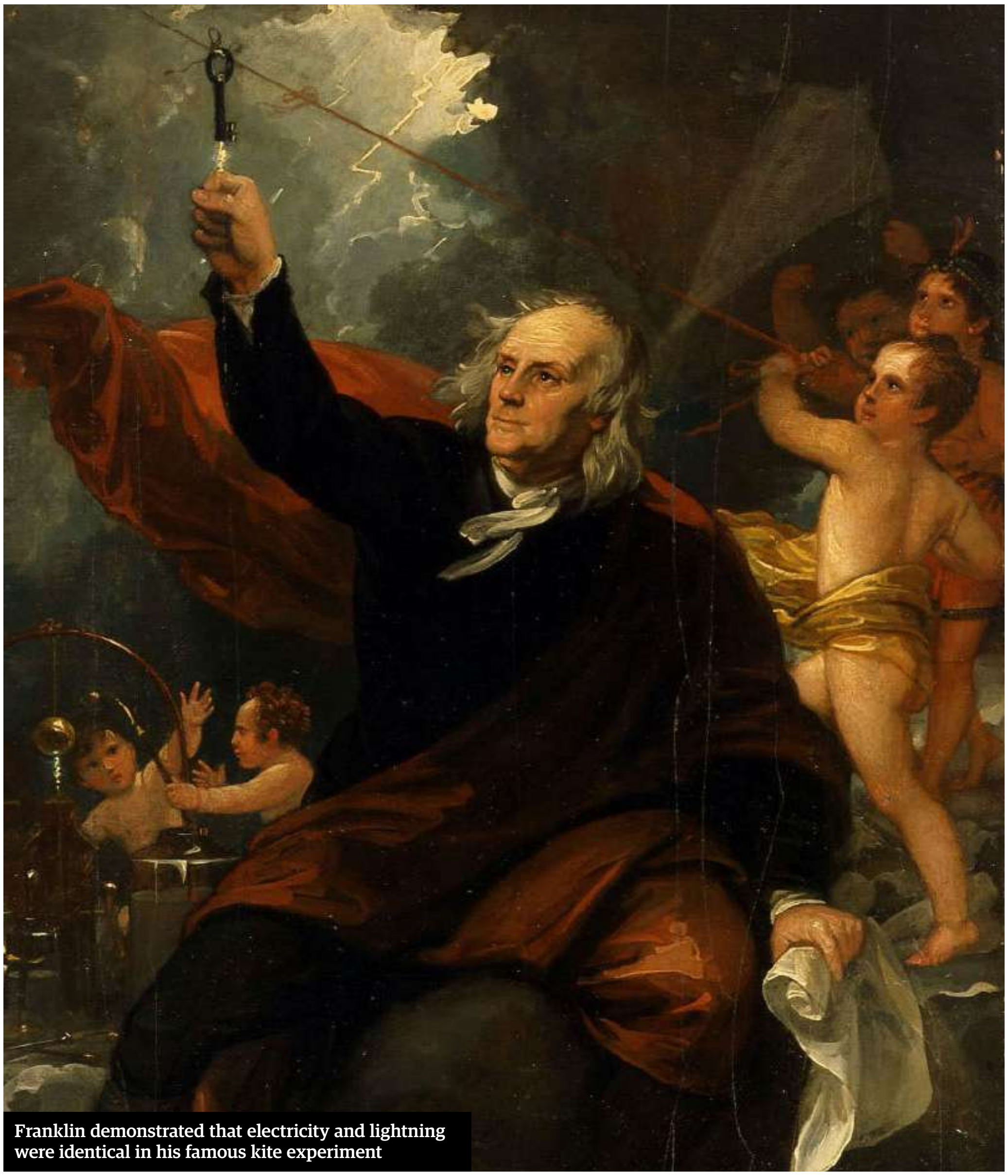
While not every project was a success, Franklin prospered. He bought out Meredith to become



Franklin was a polymath, who enjoyed successful careers in printing, science and politics



Benjamin Franklin



Franklin demonstrated that electricity and lightning were identical in his famous kite experiment

sole owner, and made enough to lend money with interest and to invest in rental properties, both in Philadelphia and many coastal towns.

During this time, Franklin's private life was extremely complicated. He courted Deborah Read when he first arrived penniless in Philadelphia in 1723 and even proposed to her - only to break it off before he went to London. Instead, Deborah married another, who ran up debts before abandoning her. In the meantime, Franklin had an illegitimate son, William, with an unknown woman. Franklin and Deborah ultimately 'revived' their relationship, but Pennsylvania's stringent divorce law meant they could not marry. Instead, on 1 September 1730, the couple held a ceremony for friends and family declaring that they would live as man and wife. In addition to raising William, they had two children of their own: Francis in 1732, who died aged four of smallpox, and Sarah, better known as 'Sally', in 1743.

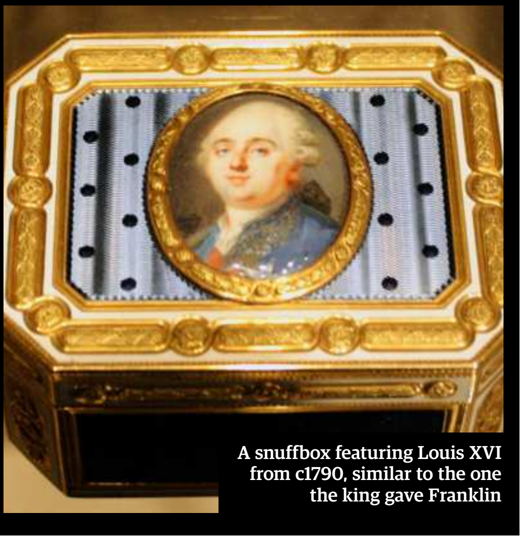
By 1748, Franklin had expanded his printing business throughout the colonies, with partnerships and franchises as far afield as New York, the Carolinas and even the West Indies. Though not yet 50 years old, he could afford to retire. Rather than adopt the life of a leisured gentleman, Franklin pursued his interest in science. He famously flew a kite with a metal house key attached to it in a thunderstorm in June 1752, assisted by his son William. However, contrary to legend, he was not actually struck by lightning - such a blast would have electrocuted him. Instead, the kite picked up the ambient electrical charge from the storm. To dispel another myth, Franklin did not discover electricity. Rather, he demonstrated the connection between lightning and electricity. Franklin was the first to publicise his findings, reporting on them in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*; though with uncharacteristic coyness, he reported the incident third-hand, never revealing that he was the one who conducted the experiment.

Franklin's snuffbox inspired the Emoluments Clause

When Franklin was set to leave Paris and return to Philadelphia in 1785, King Louis XVI requested to see him one last time. The king gave the retiring ambassador a token of his appreciation, as was customary in France at the time. But Franklin's gift was more extravagant than most: Louis XVI gave him a gilded snuff box encrusted with over 400 tiny diamonds of "beautiful water," which is to say, the highest quality.

To the egalitarian revolutionaries back home in America, accepting such an elaborate present was a symbol of everything that was wrong with the old, corrupt monarchies of Europe. Many feared that Franklin would now be indebted to the French king and that other rich European powers - including the hated King George III - could also seek to insidiously 'buy' influence in the young republic by bestowing such gifts on other officials. With this in mind, the Articles of Confederation, the precursor to the Constitution, outrightly banned American officials from receiving gifts from foreign powers. Aware of the law but afraid of offending America's greatest ally, Franklin put the dilemma before Congress.

The legislature ultimately approved the gift and Thomas Jefferson personally gave it his blessing, but the episode did not sit well with many Americans. As a result, the framers added Article I, Section 9, Clause 9 - better known as the Emoluments Clause - to the Constitution. This stated that no American officeholder shall "without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state".



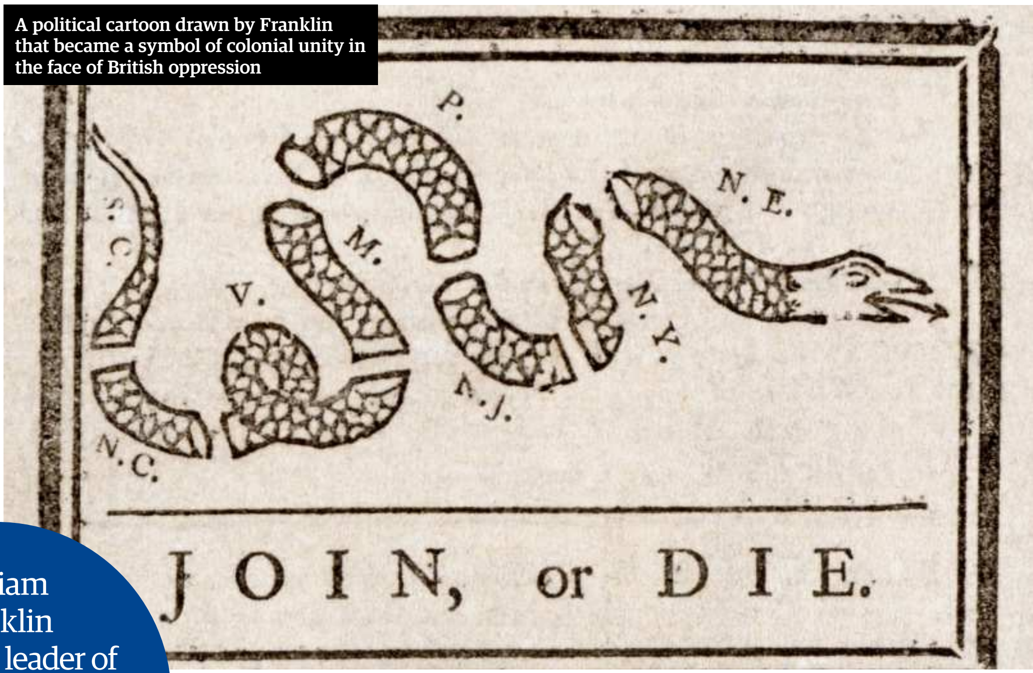
A snuffbox featuring Louis XVI from c1790, similar to the one the king gave Franklin

In the course of his lifetime, the inquisitive Franklin also studied ocean currents, meteorology, the causes of the common cold and refrigeration. In addition to the lightning rod, he also invented a stove that provided more heat while using less fuel and bifocal spectacles, which allowed for both distance and reading use. While Franklin had already proved himself a consummate businessman, he didn't patent any of his inventions, believing that knowledge should be shared instead.

With that in mind, he established the Junto, also known as the Leather Apron Club. A debate society where men could gather to discuss natural philosophy, politics and business affairs, it was modelled on the coffee houses Franklin had visited in London. Members included his business partner Meredith, a runaway Oxford student named George Webb, an optician and inventor named Thomas Godfrey, and the future 'surveyor general' of Pennsylvania William Parsons.

Despite the success of his electrical experiments, Franklin never thought science was as important as public service. With the help of his Junto, he built a civic society for the citizens of Philadelphia, innovating new institutions that people around the world take for granted today. This included a fire brigade, a lending library, an insurance company, an academy for children and a hospital. Official titles were quick to follow: Franklin became a member of the Philadelphia City Council in 1748, justice of the peace in 1749 and a city alderman in 1751. In 1753, he gained a royal appointment: deputy postmaster general, in charge of mail in all of the northern colonies.

Perhaps it was this new role or the widespread success of his newspaper that made Franklin start thinking of the colonies as a singular bloc. At the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754, Franklin proposed what has become known as the Albany Plan. He called for a union of the colonies to better defend themselves from attack. Showing great foresight for what was to come, Franklin's plan envisioned a president general with limited authority over the loose confederation and the power to levy taxes to be paid into a central treasury. Although the plan was approved by delegates from seven colonies, neither the king's representatives nor the colonial legislatures were ready for such a bold move. While the Albany Plan withered on the vine, it eventually provided the seeds for the Articles of Confederation.



A political cartoon drawn by Franklin that became a symbol of colonial unity in the face of British oppression

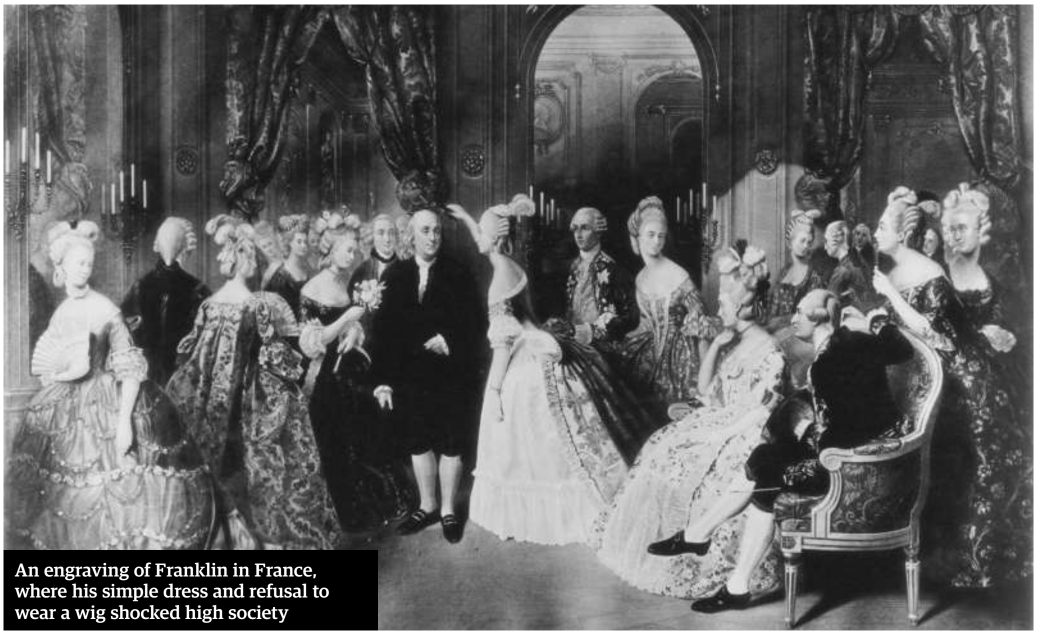
William Franklin became a leader of the loyalist movement, leading to a lifelong rift between father and son

In 1757, Franklin travelled to England as an agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Except for a two-year return to Philadelphia in 1762-64 to check on his post offices, Franklin spent the next 18 years living in London. William, now aged 27, came with him while Deborah and their daughter, 14-year-old Sally, remained behind.

Ostensibly, Franklin was there to meet with the family of William Penn, the proprietors of Pennsylvania, to insist that they pay more taxes to the colonial legislature. Privately, he hoped to persuade the British government to oust the Penn family and give the colonists greater autonomy as a royal province. Instead, he became preoccupied with the problems that arose from the hated Stamp Act of 1765.

Franklin opposed the plan, which required all legal documents, newspapers, posters and even playing cards to carry a tax stamp. But, once he saw that the passage of the tax was inevitable, he accepted defeat and ordered the necessary stamps for his printing firm, while securing his friend John Hughes the stamp agency for Pennsylvania. This turned out to be a disastrous miscalculation: Hughes was almost killed by a mob that fervently resisted the Stamp Tax while Franklin's wife, Deborah, who was alone in Philadelphia, had to rely on protection from friends.

Only Franklin's testimony before parliament denouncing the Stamp Act in 1766 saved his



An engraving of Franklin in France, where his simple dress and refusal to wear a wig shocked high society

"He didn't patent his inventions, believing that knowledge should be shared"

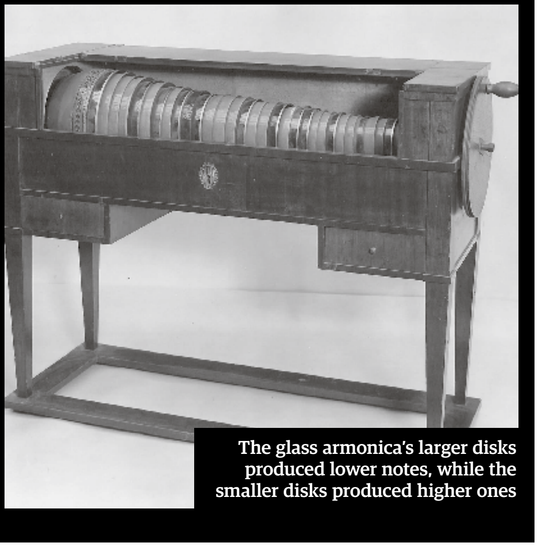
© Getty Images

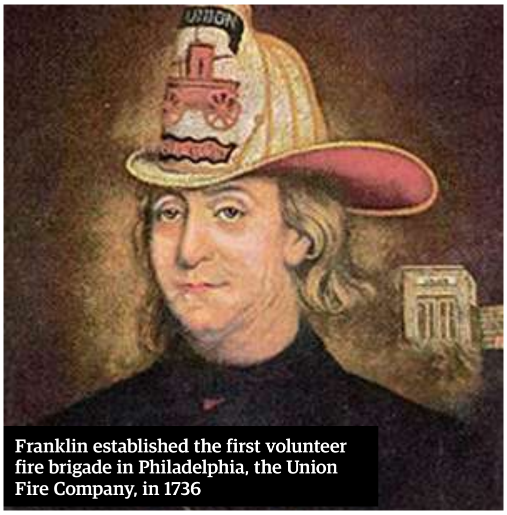
The ghostly sounds of the glass armonica

"Of all my inventions, the glass armonica has given me the greatest personal satisfaction." So wrote Franklin about the musical instrument he designed in 1761. The armonica was inspired by an English musician, Edmund Delaval, who Franklin saw perform at Cambridge University. Delaval created sounds by passing his fingers around the brims of glasses filled with water. Franklin worked with a London glassblower to recreate the music ("incomparably sweet beyond those of any other") in a less cumbersome way. His armonica (from the Italian word 'armonia', meaning 'harmony') consisted of 37 bowls mounted horizontally on an iron spindle, which could be turned using a foot pedal.

The likes of Mozart and Beethoven penned music for the armonica, while the hypnosis pioneer Franz Mesmer used the instrument to guide his patients into deep trances. At the time of Franklin's death in 1790, more than 5,000 armonicas had been built, with many appearing in concert halls across Europe and America.

Enthusiasm for the glass armonica eventually waned. Some people claimed the high-pitched, ethereal tones - which Deborah Franklin called "the music of the angels" - invoked the spirits of the dead, while others said lead paint from the instrument's crystal bowls drove the players mad. After an incident in Germany where a child died during a performance, the armonica was actually banned in a few towns. However, it was more likely the instrument's fragile design and thin sound that struggled to fill large halls that made it unpopular with gigging musicians.


The glass armonica's larger disks produced lower notes, while the smaller disks produced higher ones



Franklin established the first volunteer fire brigade in Philadelphia, the Union Fire Company, in 1736

reputation in America. However, he remained supportive of Britain and its control of the colonies. He wrote to Hughes: "A firm Loyalty to the Crown and faithful Adherence to the Government of this Nation [...] will always be the wisest Course for you and I to take, whatever may be the Madness of the Populace or their blind Leaders."

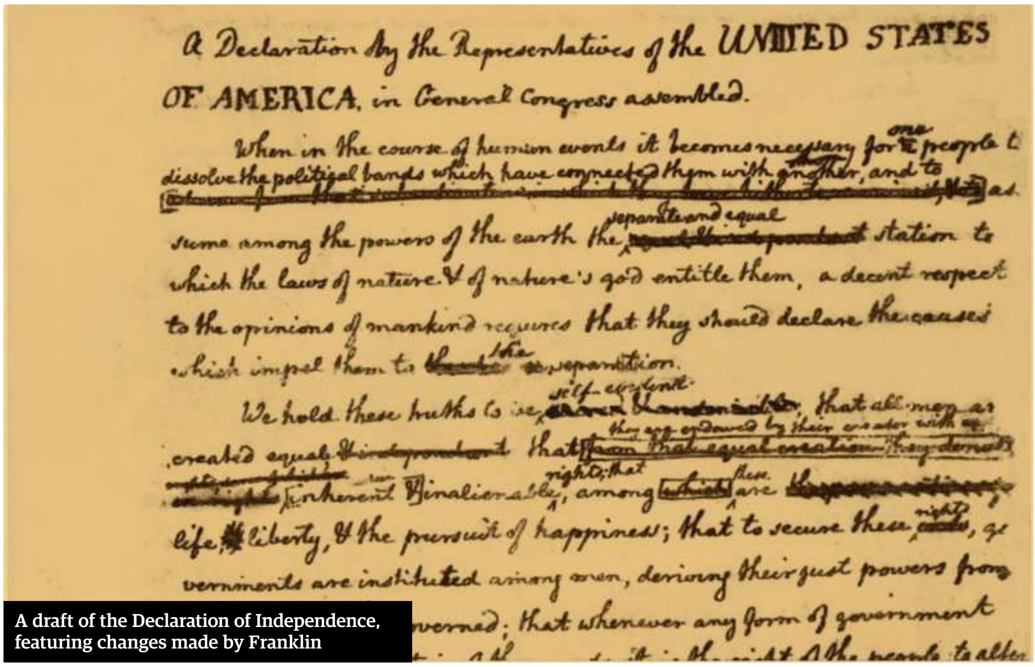
It's perhaps surprising then that in 1773, Franklin became America's first whistleblower. He sent Thomas Cushing, the speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly, a series of letters in which the Massachusetts Governor, Thomas Hutchinson, recommended an 'abridgement' of liberties - including the use of British troops as police - to curb the increasingly violent protest movement. Rather than a revolutionary act, Franklin did it out of a naive belief that exposing the letters would push blame for the growing political crisis back on colonial officials rather than the British government, de-escalating the rising tension between Britain and the colonists. Instead, after the *Boston Gazette* published the letters in June, protests broke out in the city and spread along the Eastern seaboard.

Though he only went to school for two years, in his lifetime Franklin received honorary degrees from Harvard, Yale, Oxford and more

Franklin found himself dragged before the King's Privy Council in January 1774, publicly berated, accused of stealing the letters and betraying the country. He was fired as the Colonial Deputy Postmaster two days later. Franklin stayed on in London until March 1775, involved in a futile attempt at reconciling the two sides, before setting sail for America.

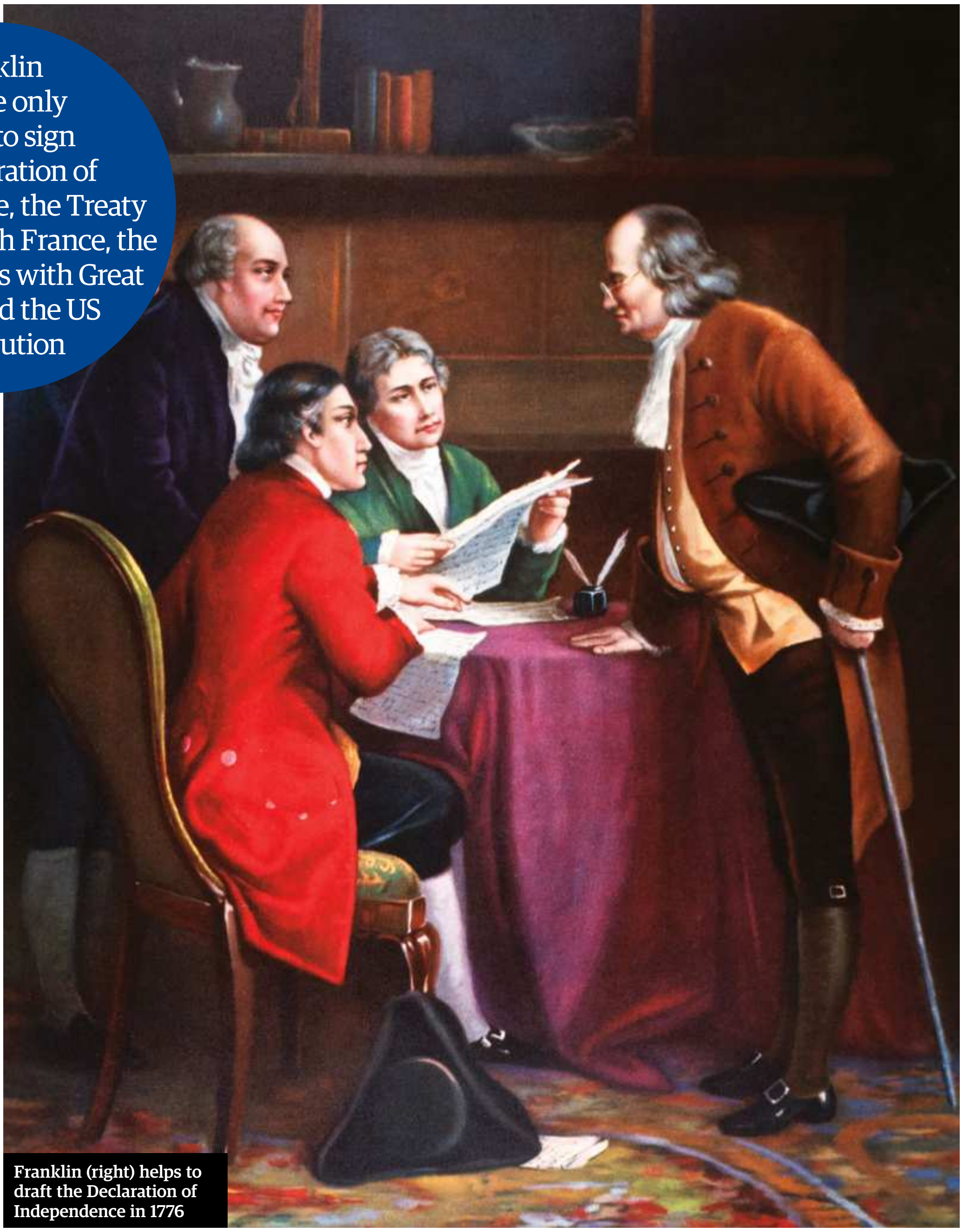
In the course of Franklin's voyage home, his homeland was transformed. Minutemen clashed with redcoats at Lexington and Concord and the American Revolution had begun. When Franklin reached Philadelphia in May 1775, the Second Continental Congress was gathering in the city to debate the insurgent colonies' next move. Franklin was immediately elected to represent Pennsylvania state once again.

When exactly Franklin embraced independence - and on which side of the Atlantic crossing - is debated, but by early July, Franklin was one of the most ardent opponents of Britain in the Continental Congress. Despite being 70 years old, he threw himself into the work of building a new country from scratch. He served on a variety


A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.
When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people t
dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to
[illegible] as-
sume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal [illegible] station to
which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect
to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes
which impel them to ~~the~~ the separation.
We hold these truths to be self-evident [illegible], that all men are
created equal [illegible] that they are endowed by their creator with ~~from that equal creation they derive~~
[illegible] inherent & inalienable rights; that among ~~which~~ these are [illegible]
life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, ~~ends~~, go-
vernments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from
verned; that whenever any form of government

A draft of the Declaration of Independence, featuring changes made by Franklin

Franklin was the only person to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Paris with Great Britain and the US Constitution



Franklin (right) helps to draft the Declaration of Independence in 1776

of congressional committees, helping to establish a new paper currency, defined rules for the Continental Army to follow, and developed a new postal system.

Most significantly of all, Franklin was part of the Committee of Five tasked with co-authoring the Declaration of Independence. Although Thomas Jefferson wrote the vast majority of the document, the old newspaperman put his editor's hat back on, proofreading Jefferson's text and tweaking the wording. It's thought it was Franklin who drew a thick black line through Jefferson's phrase (still visible on the 'rough draft' held by the Library of Congress) that said: "We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable." Franklin changed this to the words that are now enshrined in history: "We hold these truths to be self-evident."

No sooner was the Declaration of Independence signed, Franklin was sent to Paris to seek military aid from France. The Continental Congress could not have chosen a better representative. Playing on the French aristocracy's romanticised view of the American frontiersman, he arrived at King Louis XVI's royal court wearing a homespun brown suit and fur hat. While defying the stiff protocol of Europe's most formal court was a gamble, it paid off: Franklin became an overnight celebrity. Frenchmen sympathetic to the American cause donned fur caps, while ladies had their wigs styled in a look known as 'coiffures a là Franklin'.

Franklin also knew that real diplomacy in France wasn't accomplished around the negotiating table, but the dinner table. No doubt drawing on his experiences with the Junto, he spent a great deal of time in the salons and at dinner parties. In this way, he won the trust and respect of the French court. In 1778, he secured an alliance with France, which saw them commit supplies, volunteer fighters and a fleet that helped win the Revolutionary War. Franklin also managed to secure loan after loan for the new republic from France's increasingly impoverished government.

But not everyone agreed with Franklin's methods. In 1783, while he was part of Franklin's negotiating team tasked with making peace with Great Britain from Paris, John Adams complained that Franklin enjoyed himself while he and John Jay did all the work. However, it was Franklin who successfully mollified Louis XVI when Adams and Jay jeopardised French support. The problem arose from the fact that France wanted a three-way treaty that would end their war with Britain, as well as between Britain and the 13 Colonies. Months passed and various offers and counter-offers were made by the former colonies and Great Britain.

Meanwhile, France was negotiating settlements with Great Britain that involved portions of the North American continent. Frustrated with how long the process was taking, Adams and Jay decided to negotiate a treaty directly with Britain. The British made them an incredible offer, one that gave the Americans almost everything they demanded; even Franklin had to concede it was the best deal they could get. But the French were offended that the Americans had gone behind their backs. Franklin had to use all his diplomatic skills to convince the chief minister that Adams and Jay had acted out of lack of propriety, not hostility.

Franklin stayed in France until 1785, when he reluctantly returned to America. Leaving the many friends he'd made behind, he feared he would be a "stranger in my own country" after so many years abroad. His fears proved correct as he found himself politically marginalised. Though he owned two slaves for many years, before he died in 1790, Franklin signed a statement calling for the abolishment of slavery, which Congress rejected. After his death, the House of Representatives voted to declare a month of mourning for him, but the Senate rejected that as well, possibly because he wrote a scathing response to the failure of his anti-slavery petition. However, down the decades, Franklin has been widely accepted as one of the United States' most famous figures and come to embody the American ideal of the self-made man.

"Even Franklin had to concede it was the best deal they could get"

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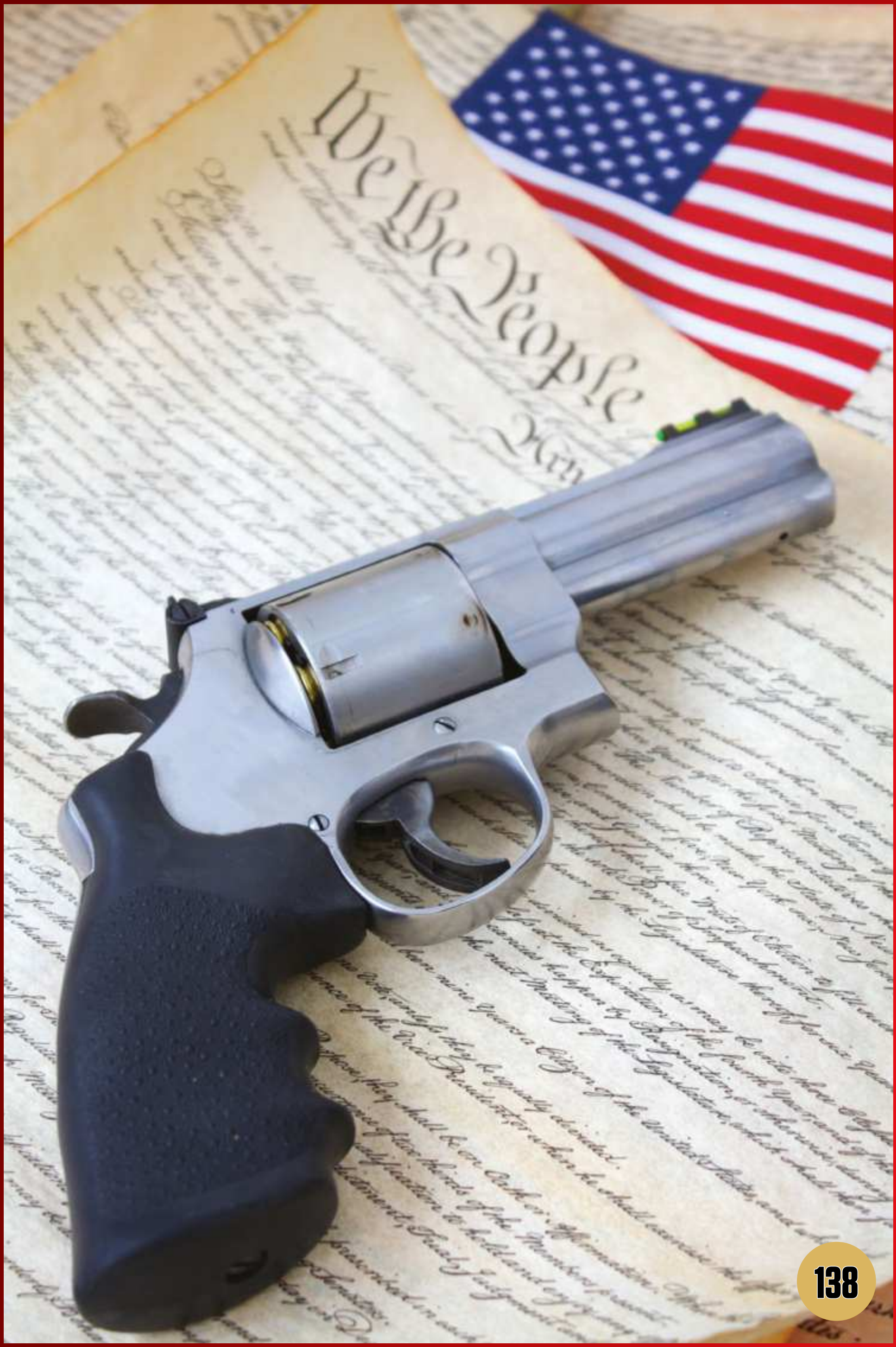

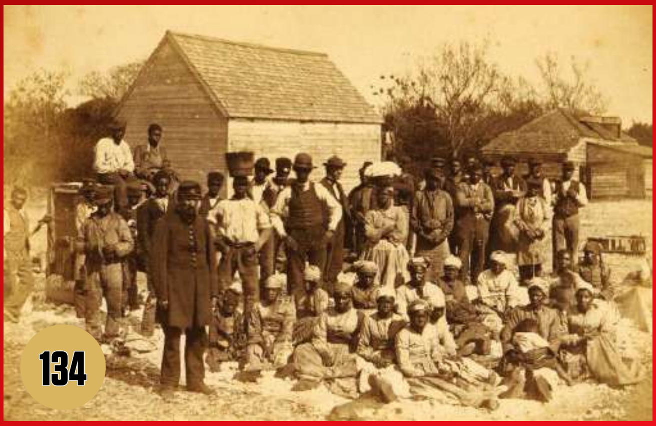

Legacy

Despite their historic achievements, the Founding Fathers weren't without their failures and controversies

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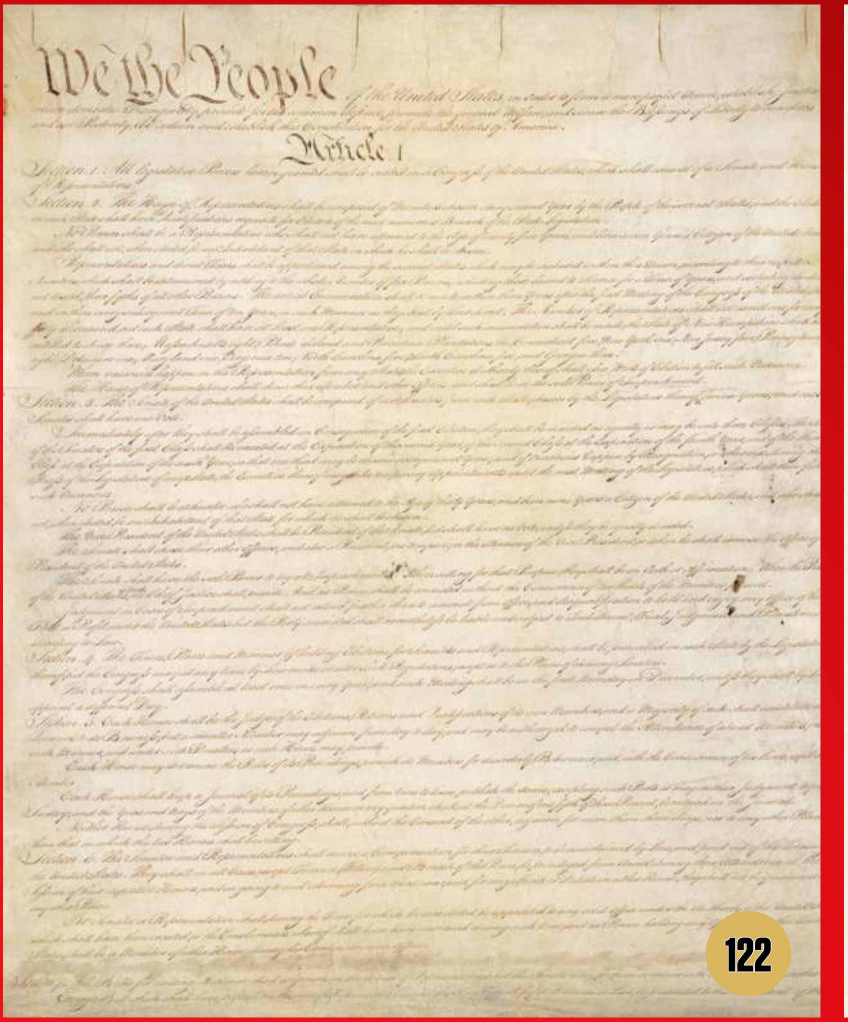
128 **America's forgotten Founding Fathers**

134 **Controversies of the Founding Fathers**

138 **The amendment locked in controversy**



We the People

Article 1

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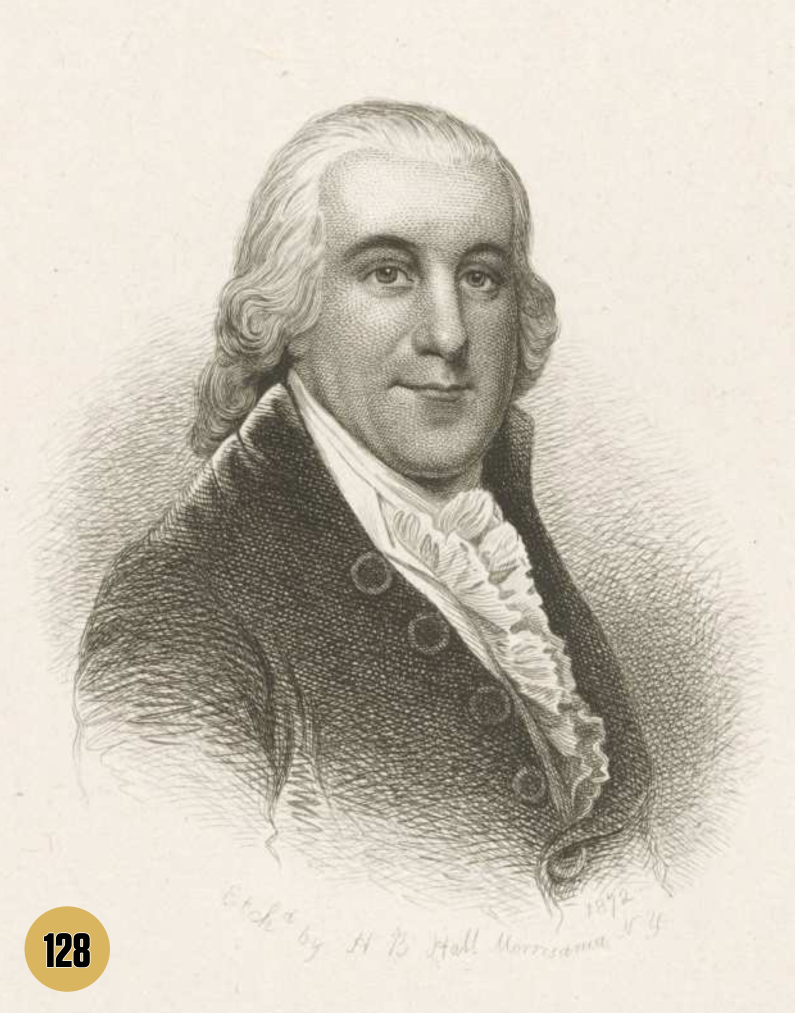
Etch'd by H B Hall Morrisania N.Y.
1872

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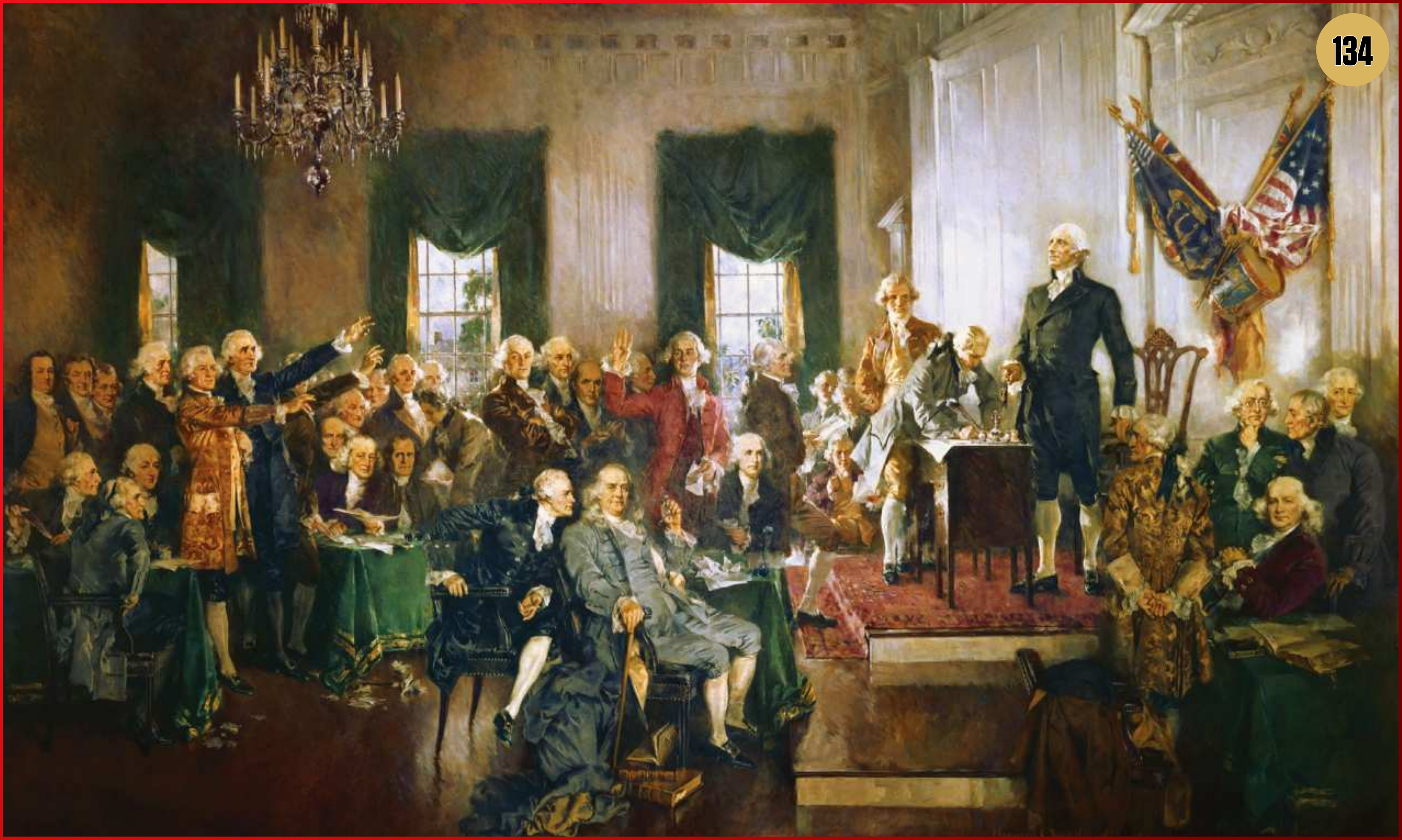

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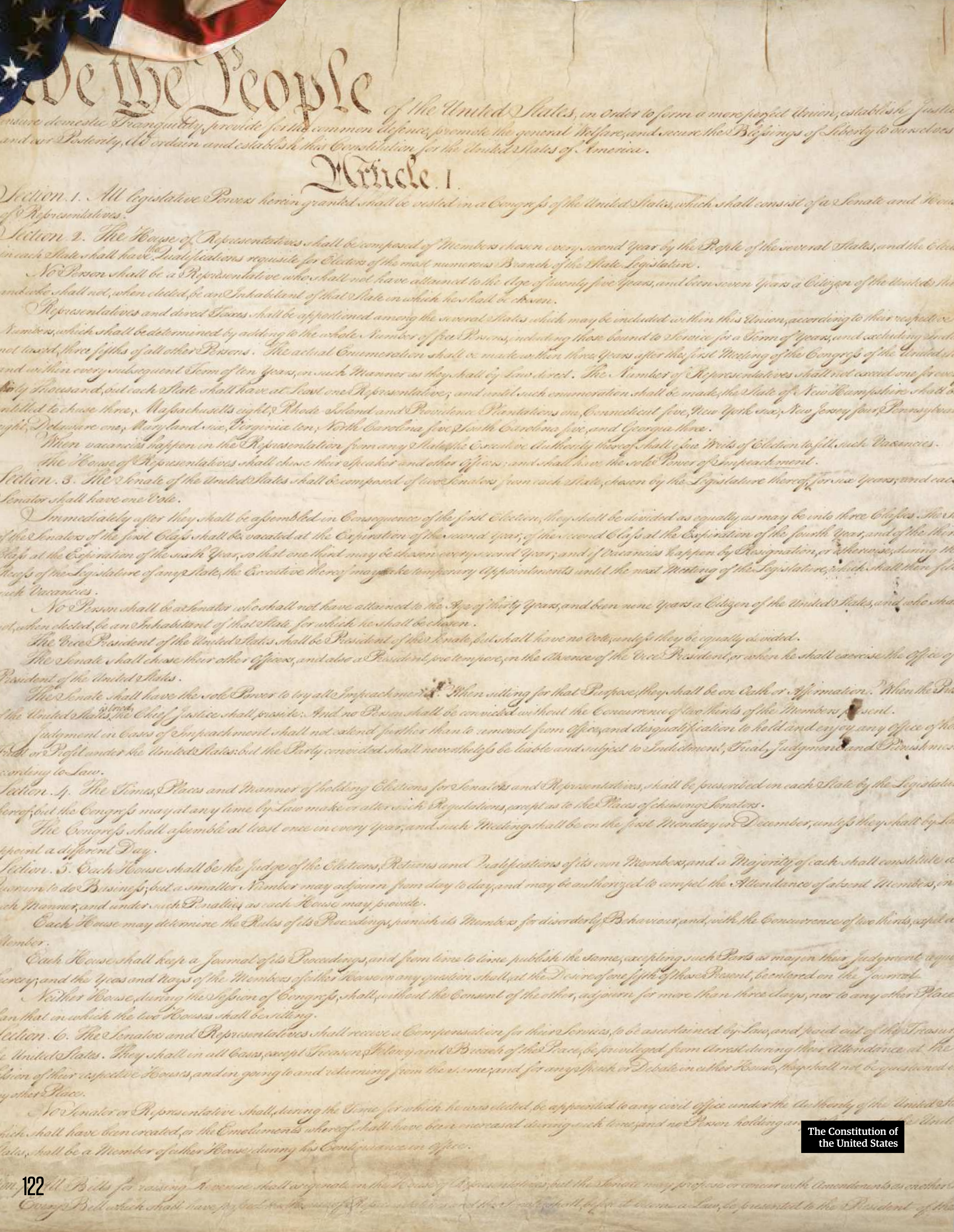


We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justic
nsure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Bleſsings of Liberty to ourselves
and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article. I.

Section. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congreſs of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and Hou
of Representatives.

Section. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Elec
in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.
No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United St
and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.
Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective
Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indi
not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congreſs of the United St
and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for ev
hirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall b
ntitled to chuse three, Maſsachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvan
ight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.
When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall iſsue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.
The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and eac
Senator shall have one Vote.
Immediately after they shall be aſsembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Claſses. The S
of the Senators of the first Claſs shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Claſs at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the thir
Claſs at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during th
Receſs of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fil
uch Vacancies.
No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who sha
ot, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.
The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unleſs they be equally divided.
The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office o
President of the United States.
The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the Pre
f the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.
Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of hon
rust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheleſs be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishme
ccording to Law.

Section. 4. The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislatu
hereof; but the Congreſs may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.
The Congreſs shall aſsemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unleſs they shall by La
ppoint a different Day.

Section. 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a
uorum to do Buſineſs; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in
uch Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.
Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a
Member.
Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment requ
ecrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.
Neither House, during the Seſsion of Congreſs, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place
han that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

Section. 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasu
e United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the
ſsion of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned
y other Place.
No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United St
hich shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been encreased during such time; and no Person holding an
the Unit
tates, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

on. 7. All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other
Every Bill which shall have paſsed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the

Achievements of the Founding Fathers

Over a remarkably short time frame, the Founding Fathers broke free from colonial rule and established an entirely new country

Not least of the achievements of the Founding Fathers was the winning of the war for independence over the forces of colonialism. At the conclusion of the American Revolutionary War, the immediate agenda for the victorious 13 Colonies was to create a new government to take up the political slack created by cutting loose from the British parliament. Rather than amend the existing frameworks, the intention from the outset was to create a completely new system of government. The Constitutional Convention of 1787, taking place in Philadelphia and presided over by George Washington, resulted in the creation of the United States Constitution and the forming of the United States Congress. The creation of the United States would be an extraordinary project: the setting up of the world's first large-scale republic, and its first modern nation state based on liberal principles. Incredibly – the war itself notwithstanding – it was also largely achieved without violence, and certainly without the brutal societal purges that characterised the likes of the French Revolution. The British philosopher Alfred Lord Whitehead opined that the only other example of an emerging empire behaving in such an exemplary fashion was that of Rome under Caesar.

The Declaration of Independence of 1776 stated that the united colonies were, "and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved". With that complete divorce from the past, however, came the question of what the future would look like. The Founding Fathers were faced with the task of defining what their independence actually meant: what an independent government would look like; what sort of politics it would practice; and what kind of laws that government would make.

Francis Hopkinson designed the first US flag. He charged a cask of wine for the job, but was never paid!

State and national constitutions

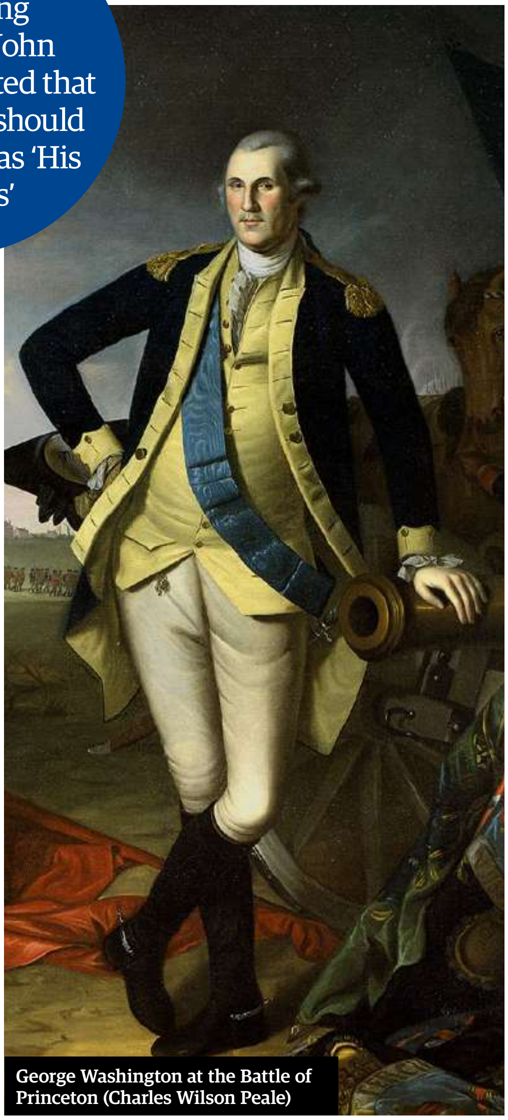
The backbone of the republic would be the Constitution, thrashed out in its nascent form in a few months between 1787 and 1788. It has been amended and endlessly debated ever since, but essentially, incredibly even, it remains the same Constitution that was put into action in the late-18th century.

The Tenth Amendment, plus a clause in Article IV of the Constitution, also guarantees each state the right to their own state constitution, however. While all are measured against "the supreme law of the land", they reflect topics unique to each state and are more often and more easily amended. They also tend to be much longer than the core Constitution: Alabama's holding the record at more than 70 times the number of words. Each state government retains its own structure of legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as its own bill of rights. That uneasy compromise balancing federal government and individual state power still holds today – although one of the outcomes of the American Civil War was the strengthening of a central government which the states cannot, ultimately, overrule.

Federalism and state sovereignty

Nevertheless, the Founders' commitment to a federalist system of government remains in place, based on the belief that a strong central government would, to states far away from it, be indistinguishable from a distant colonial power. Without one, the newly formed United States risked failing to protect the interests of its citizens and ultimately sacrificing the independence so hard fought for. A government was needed, but one whose power was controlled

Despite the US rejecting monarchy, John Adams suggested that the president should be addressed as 'His Highness'



George Washington at the Battle of Princeton (Charles Wilson Peale)

Barack Obama criticised the Constitution in 2001

by checks and balances. Congress should truly represent the American people, and the president should not have the dubious potential to become a king in all but name.

The eventual solution was to keep the government as decentralised as was possibly practical. As the 'Father of the Constitution' James Madison phrased it, "The powers delegated to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation and foreign commerce… The powers reserved to the several States will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement and prosperity of the State."

Known as 'dual sovereignty', it's a delicately calibrated seesaw. Too much federal power risks diminishing the authority of the individual states, while an increase in the power of the states risks a factionalised America at odds with the notion of "one nation indivisible". While it may, from time to time, swing in favour of one or the other, the balance, to this day, just about holds.

The Bill of Rights

As previously mentioned, the Constitution as it exists today is not quite the document first ratified in 1788. There have, to date, been 27 amendments, the first ten of which make up the Bill of Rights.

The purpose of those ten amendments was to clarify and guarantee specific personal freedoms and rights to the citizens of the United States; establish clearly the limitations of the Federal government's power; and declare explicitly that any powers that the Constitution did not specifically delegate to the US Congress resided in the people themselves, or in the individual states.

Exhaustively debated for two years, the Bill of Rights as ratified in December of 1791 comprised amendments protecting freedom of religion, freedom of the press and free speech; the right of the people to keep and bear arms; the right of private homeowners not to have to provide quarters for soldiers; the right not to be subject to unreasonable personal searches or seizures of property; the right to properly observe legal processes; the right to trial by impartial jury, plus other rights specific to court proceedings; rights in federal, as opposed to state cases; the right not to be subject to excessive, "cruel or unusual" punishments; the fact that the rights listed in the Constitution are not an exhaustive list, and that unspecified others also exist; plus the aforementioned distinction of the powers of the federal and state governments.

All of the above – apart from the uncontroversial amendment about not being expected to house the military – continue to underpin the US systems of law and government, and have informed Supreme Court decisions as recently as the 21st and late-20th centuries.

Evolution of political parties

At the time the Constitution was signed, there were no political parties in the United States (and indeed, no voter-based political parties anywhere in the world). The Founding Fathers did not initially see the necessity for their new country to be divided along partisan lines, and in fact saw it as potentially dangerous to the political project they were engaged in. A country divided against itself was one vulnerable to outside powers of the type they had just dispensed with. George Washington was not a member of a political party at any time during his election campaign or presidency, and his Farewell Address of 1796 expressed the hope that parties would never be thought necessary.

The division of opinion between those who became the Federalist Party (led in the beginning by Alexander Hamilton) and those who became Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party, however, eventually became untenable for a single government. The Federalists favoured the idea of a strong central government with close ties to a centralised banking system and its inherent men of wealth. The Democratic-Republicans rejected that system as elitist, and in all other ways defined

"While the achievements of the Founding Fathers are extraordinary and undeniable, we shouldn't quite view their legacy as a flawless one"

themselves in direct opposition to their Federalist rivals, but principally in their advocacy of state over and above centralised power.

By 1828, the Democratic-Republican Party had become simply the Democratic Party. The Federalists had essentially vanished during the so-called 'Era of Good Feelings' when, following the War of 1812, there had been an overwhelming feeling of national purpose and a desire for unity. As opposition to the Democrats, the Whigs succeeded them, advocating the primacy of Congress rather than that of the president. And following internecine conflicts, the Whigs eventually collapsed, leaving the Republican Party to rise from its ashes in the 1850s, initially defining itself by its opposition to slavery. Broadly speaking – transformative interim eras such as the Civil War and Reconstruction notwithstanding – those same two parties dominate American politics to this day. To date, there have been 15 Democrat US presidents and 19 Republicans.

Thomas Jefferson believed that the US Constitution should have been rewritten every 19 years

The presidency

In the original aftermath of the Revolutionary War, the Founding Fathers were reluctant to create a new system that in any way resembled a monarchy. Under the Articles of Confederation that established an alliance between the individual states, it was Congress as a unit that was given central authority, without a specific figurehead. Once peace had been achieved, however, the states turned towards their local internal affairs, but found that, economically and politically, they were comparatively weak and disorganised, and often competing against each other for trade. These were the chaotic effects of an "excess of democracy" that led to the creation of the role of United States president, and its inclusion in the Constitution.

January 1789 saw state electors, with two votes each, casting their ballots for the United States' first president. While there were ten candidates in total, including John Adams and John Jay, it was a foregone conclusion that George Washington would win the election. The other nine men on the ballot were more interested in the vice presidency, which would be given to the runner up. Adams won that.

While this system worked initially, however, it proved no longer fit for purpose once political parties became part of the equation. In 1796, the Federalist John Adams ended up with a Democratic-Republican vice president in Thomas Jefferson. The 1800 election, meanwhile, was even more contentious, ending up with Jefferson and his running mate Aaron Burr in a tied result, thanks to the state electors using their two votes to plump for both. The lack of a majority outcome necessitated the election being referred to the House of Representatives, and 36 further ballots before Jefferson was finally declared the winner. The situation led directly to the Constitution's 12th Amendment in 1804, which specifies that each elector must pick a president and a vice president separately. This is how the Electoral College operates to this day.

Many believed Washington was an ideal person to hold power, simply because of his reluctance to do so

Separation of church and state

The US Constitution does not mention God at all. That doesn't mean that religion wasn't important to the Founding Fathers, but it's a symptom of their diverse views and beliefs: some being Enlightenment free-thinkers and others evangelicals, for example.

The result is that the Constitution contains two sections which appear to explicitly separate church and state, meaning that religious leanings should have no bearing on legal or political policy-making decisions. The first is the Establishment Clause, stating, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof". The second is Article VI, Section III, which says, "No religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States".

The former protects religion from state interference, and the latter prohibits religious influence on the government. To some, those two statements are contradictory, or cancel each other out. In general, however, it's understood that, in John F Kennedy's words, "America is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish, [a country] where no public official either requests or accepts instructions on public policy from the Pope, the National Council of Churches or any other ecclesiastical source."

Whether in reality it would ever be possible to have an atheist president in power, however, remains debatable.

The Founding Fathers of espionage

Among the more unsung achievements of the Founding Fathers is their contribution to the history of intelligence, counter-intelligence and covert operations.

George Washington, during his long military career, was adept at teaching spycraft to the large networks of agents he oversaw, and was also efficient at using the intelligence they gathered when planning and conducting his military operations. During the Revolutionary War, he spent more than a tenth of his military funds on intelligence activities, such as sending undercover personnel to Boston to establish secret anti-British networks there.

Benjamin Franklin was a master of propaganda operations during the Revolutionary War and a director of precise paramilitary strikes against key British targets. He coordinated privateers operating out of European ports to hamper British efforts, and set up a system whereby captured ships were bought by the American revolutionary cause, resupplied, refitted and remanned. The covert network became known as 'Franklin's Navy'.

And John Jay's achievements in the arena of espionage have led to his being dubbed 'The Founding Father of American counterIntelligence'. He rooted out a conspiracy of British sympathisers in influential American positions; and used a number of trusted counterintelligence agents to infiltrate anti-independence networks. "There are cases," he wrote, "where the most useful intelligence may be obtained, if the persons possessing it can be relieved from apprehensions of discovery."

All three men have meeting rooms named after them at the CIA's Liaison Conference Centre in Langley, Virginia.

The entrance to the modern CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia.

John F Kennedy made the separation of church and state explicit

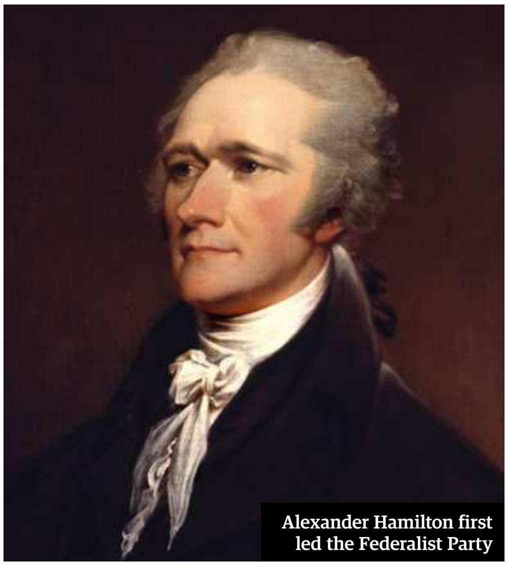
Failures

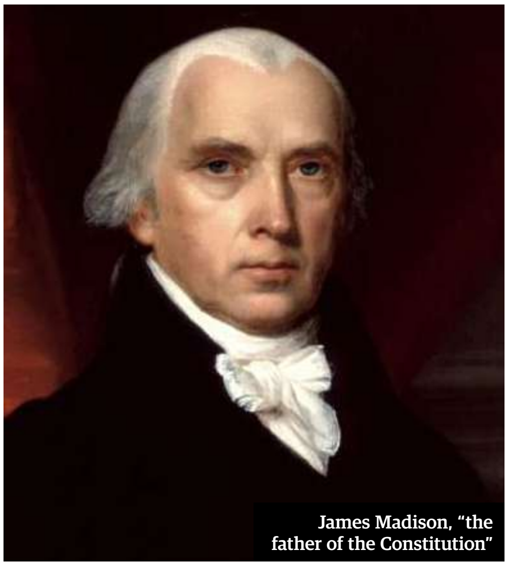
While the achievements of the Founding Fathers are extraordinary and undeniable, we shouldn't quite view their legacy as a flawless one. There are, for example, lasting controversies over the interpretation of the Constitution and its amendments. They include failures to address the horror of slavery; failure to cater to the rights of African Americans, Native Americans and other ethnic minorities; failure to anticipate or recognise suffrage and the rights of women; and the lack of clarity over what the "right of the people to keep and bear arms" actually means.

Much of this is due to historical context: injustices that seem abhorrent to modern eyes were simply not issues that would have occurred to many of the Founding Fathers as important. But there's also an argument that these missed opportunities are fundamental symptoms of shortcomings in the Constitution itself.

In 2001, some years before his election as president, Barack Obama opined that the Constitution is actually "a charter of negative liberties" which fails to guarantee important economic rights to its citizens. It "says what the states can't do to you [and] what the Federal

> "American citizens, to this day, do not have the right to free health care: a situation baffling to most of the developed world"

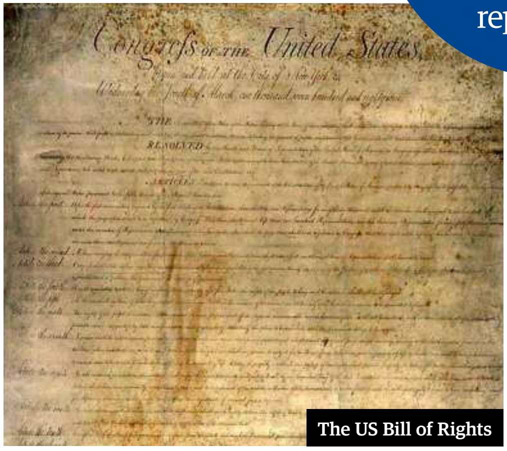

Alexander Hamilton first led the Federalist Party


James Madison, "the father of the Constitution"

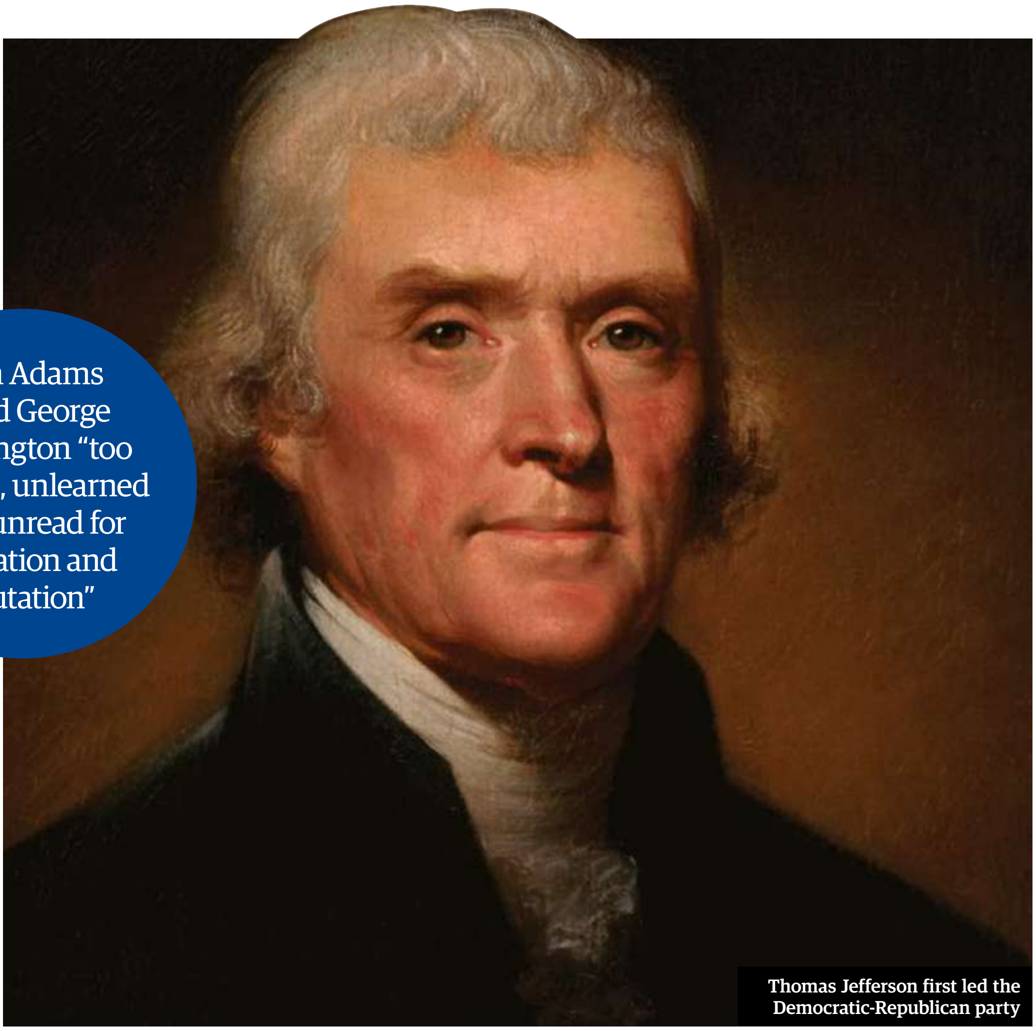
government can't do to you," Obama explained, "but doesn't say what the Federal government or state government must do on your behalf."

This explains, for example, the fact that American citizens, to this day, do not have the right to free health care: a situation baffling to most of the developed world. The Constitution's constraints on the government's ability to provide such positive rights, and the courts' dogged focus on tradition and precedent, mean that many feel America is too in thrall to the Founders' impressive legacy. The tendency of the country's policy-makers and lawmakers to look backwards and inwards rather than forwards and outwards is testament to the power of the Founders' work, but it isn't necessarily always healthy.

> John Adams called George Washington "too illiterate, unlearned [and] unread for his station and reputation"

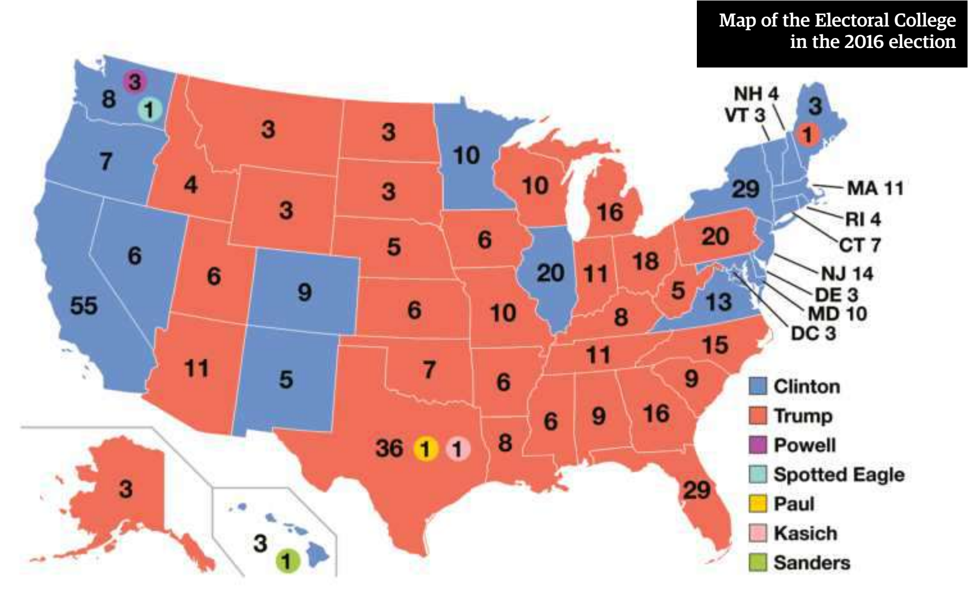


The US Bill of Rights



Thomas Jefferson first led the Democratic-Republican party

The Electoral College problem



Map of the Electoral College in the 2016 election

As established in the Constitution, the Electoral College is the mechanism by which the United States elects its president and vice president. The votes that decide an election are not the mass votes of the population (although these are counted and referred to as the 'popular vote'), but those of a vastly smaller number of representatives, themselves elected by each state. The number of each state's electors is equal to that of its representatives in Congress. California currently has the most at 55. Electors generally cast their vote in favour of the winner of the popular vote in their state, but many states do not actually require this by law.

America's democracy then is based on a system of indirect election: citizens do not actually get a definitive say in who gets elected as president and vice president; they only get a say regarding who is allowed to vote on their behalf. And in cases where ballots for the Electoral College have an indeterminate result, electors can even be legislatively imposed. Each elector currently represents an average of 711,000 US citizens. This imperfect system has scarcely changed since its inception, and the controversy surrounding it has only increased in recent years. On four occasions since the signing of the Constitution, a president has been elected who actually lost the popular vote. Two of those - George W Bush in 2000 and Donald Trump in 2016 - have been in the 21st century. The United States is the only country in the world that allows this to be legally possible.

America's forgotten Founding Fathers

Not all the Founding Fathers could have a public profile like George Washington's. Some extraordinary characters are less well remembered

The stars among the Founding Fathers are generally agreed to be John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Washington. But an undertaking as great as the founding of an independent United States of America was obviously the work of far more than seven men, and there are dozens of supporting players further down the cast list. Some were actual signatories to the Declaration of Independence. Some did not put pen to the actual document, but were otherwise involved in negotiations and ratifications regarding the Constitution and its amendments, either directly or more peripherally. Some, like Timothy Pickering, even changed their minds and ended their political careers once more supporting the British. Some opposed slavery and were in favour of emancipation, while others, like Edward Rutledge, vehemently defended their right to hold men in bondage. Some were Federalist and some were Republican, while others, like Elbridge Gerry, saw no actual need for labels, and resisted the formation of distinct political parties. Some played no part as signatories or even delegates, but have become viewed as Founding Fathers due to sterling work in the formation of American society and its institutions (Noah Webster, for example, of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, laid important foundations in America's education system).

All, however, played out their small parts in the bigger picture, thrashing out the debates necessary to reach the point where their unique new country was operating with some semblance of a workable system. While the big names are given their due elsewhere in this volume then, here are ten more that history has, if not genuinely forgotten, then certainly overlooked to some extent. Some are eccentric; one could even argue that some were plain wrong. But America would not have been the same without them.

Carter Braxton

1736-1797

Virginia's final Founding Father

Braxton County, West Virginia was founded in 1836 and named in his honour

Firmly entrenched in the Virginian aristocracy, Carter Braxton was a wealthy plantation owner and the father of an extraordinary 18 children: he may officially be the Founding Father with the most descendants. He represented King William County as a longstanding member of the Virginia House of Burgesses - the first legislative assembly of elected representatives in North America - and was also King William County's sheriff and colonel of its militia. In the latter capacity, he helped avert a violent uprising in the spring of 1775, when tensions with the British were running high. Virginia's nervous British colonial governor Lord Dunmore had seized gunpowder stored in Williamsburg, and local militias, looking for any excuse for a skirmish, were eager to take it back. Braxton was part of a delegation that defused the situation, convincing the British to pay for the ammunition. Revolution, on that particular day, was averted.

That cool head led to Braxton being considered a moderate politician, and even a British sympathiser (although he was never loyal to the Crown). He was certainly a reluctant revolutionary, and only became part of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia in early 1776 to fill the place of Peyton Randolph, who had died suddenly. Nevertheless, he signed the Declaration of Independence, and his is the final name in the Virginia Delegation.

Button Gwinnett

1735-1777

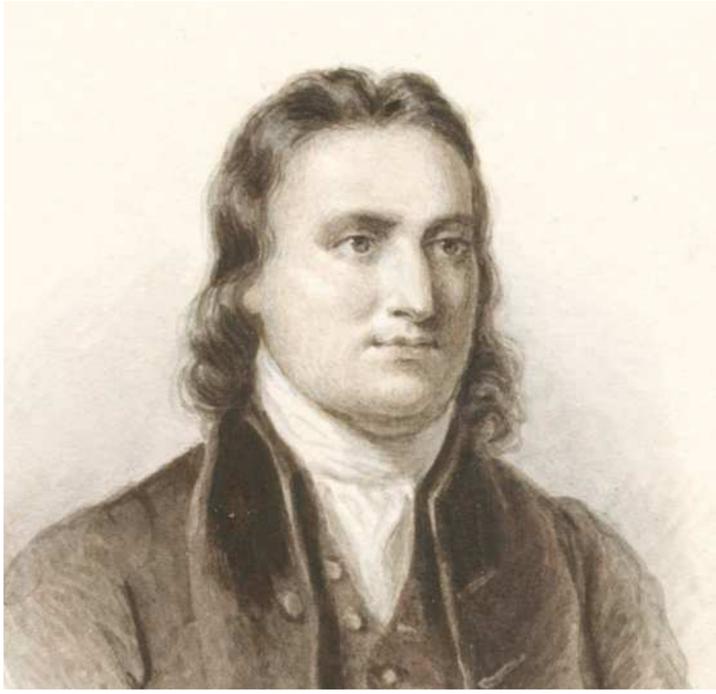
The radical duellist

Gwinnett's autograph is the rarest of all the Founding Fathers', highly sought-after by collectors

In complete contrast to Braxton, Button Gwinnett was a firebrand, leading Georgia's most radical factions against the British - despite having himself been born in England. His signature on the Declaration of Independence is the first of Georgia's three.

His ambitions were thwarted in several of his endeavours. He failed as a plantation owner and farmer, and was beaten to the leadership of Georgia's militia by his political rival Colonel Lachlan McIntosh. But he did eventually find himself part of the Georgia State Legislature and president of Georgia's Committee of Safety. In the former position, he wrote the original draft of Georgia's first state constitution. In the latter, he was responsible for an attack on British East Florida: a botched attempt to secure Georgia's southern border.

Georgia's legislature cleared Gwinnett of any wrongdoing in the Florida Affair, but declined to elect him governor, in part thanks to McIntosh's vocal opposition (he publicly called Gwinnett "a scoundrel and a lying rascal"). The furious Gwinnett challenged McIntosh to a pistol duel, which took place on 16 May 1777. Each shot the other with some accuracy, but McIntosh survived while Gwinnett died from his wound.



Elbridge Gerry

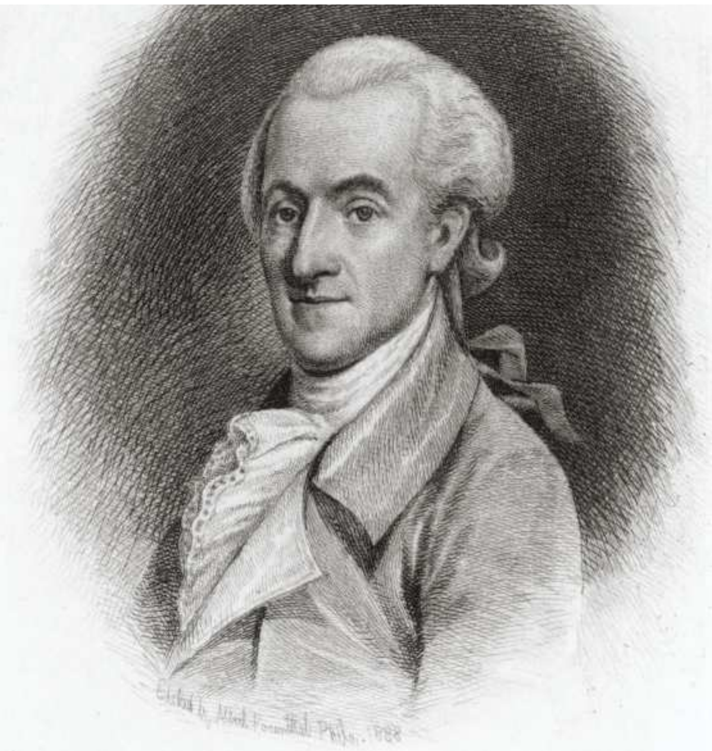
1744-1814

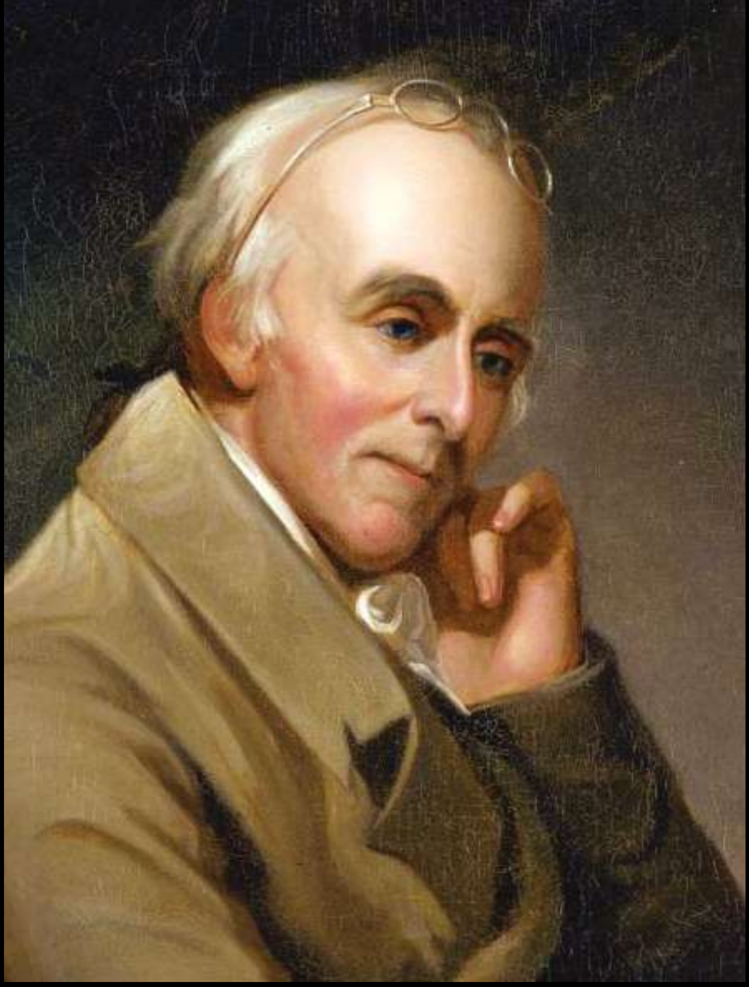
The political manipulator

Gerry was initially an opponent of the idea of separate political parties

Elbridge Gerry is these days best remembered for giving his name to the dubious practice of 'gerrymandering': the process of drawing up electoral districts in a way that benefits the party already in power. Prior to his controversial redistricting of Massachusetts in 1812, however, he had been a staunch opponent of British colonial rule, and an active organiser of the resistance in the early stages of the American Revolutionary War. He went on to be a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation, and made more speeches at the Constitutional Convention than almost anybody else. But he was also one of three holdouts who refused to sign the United States Constitution because it lacked a Bill of Rights.

He played a major role in averting war with Republican France in the so-called XYZ Affair, and went on, after several failed attempts, to become Governor of Massachusetts and, ultimately, America's fifth vice president in 1813 - the running mate of James Madison. He died just over a year later, and is the only signer of the Declaration of Independence to be buried in the US capital of Washington, DC. His grave is in the Congressional Cemetery.





Benjamin Rush

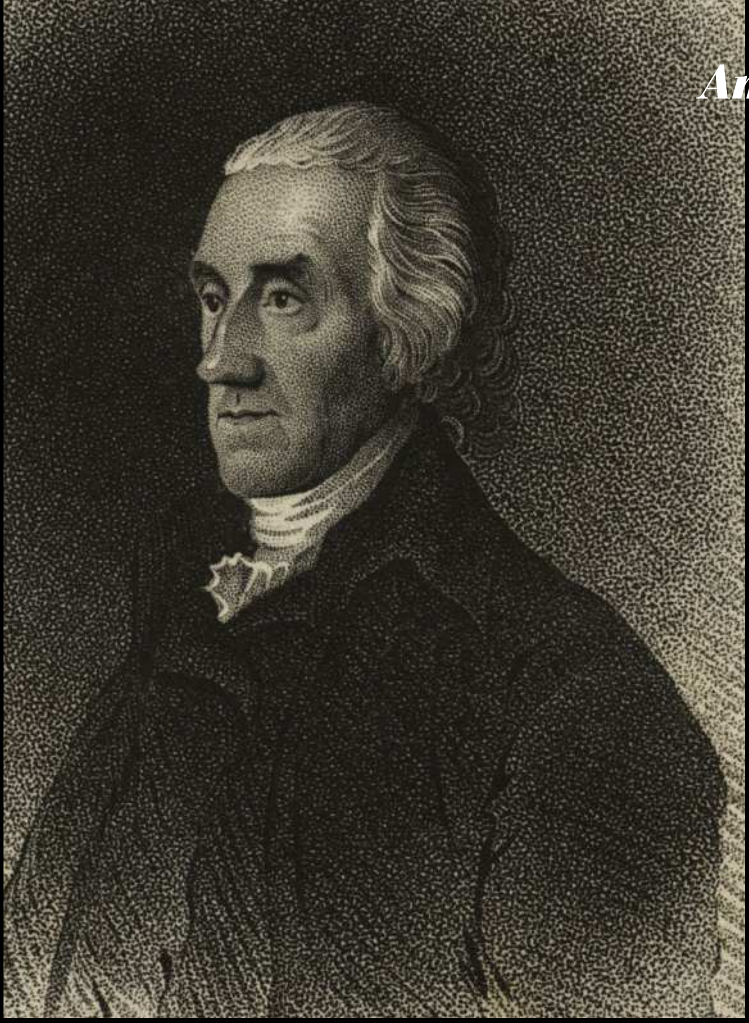
1746-1813

The founding physician

Rush's description of himself was, "He aimed right"

Benjamin Rush was a prominent figure in the American Enlightenment: a civic leader, politician, social reformer and teacher, but first and foremost a physician. He laid the foundations for future medical research and the study of psychiatry, and made such an impression on his thousands of students that several of them established Chicago's Rush Medical College in his honour after his death. The fact that he was also a signatory on the Declaration of Independence is almost a footnote to a life that would have been impressive anyway.

Active in separatist groups during the American Revolution, he was able to put his medical skills to use on the battlefield, becoming Surgeon General of the Continental Army and publishing the influential 'Directions for preserving the health of soldiers', which remained in print until the early-20th century. He was anti-slavery, anti-capital punishment and a supporter of the rights of women. But his opposition of George Washington over what he perceived as Washington's chaotic revolutionary campaign still puts Rush on the wrong side of history. In later years, he changed his mind, deciding after all that Washington "was the highly favoured instrument whose patriotism and name contributed greatly to… the independence of the United States."



Robert Treat Paine

1731-1814

The 'Objection Maker'

Paine was Massachusetts' first Attorney General

Robert Treat Paine was a Massachusetts lawyer and politician: part of a family that could trace its roots in the British Colonies all the way back to the *Mayflower*. A formidable force on the legal bench, he opposed John Adams as a prosecutor in the 1770 trial of the soldiers accused of the Boston Massacre. He lost on that occasion, but Adams maintained an admiration for his quick-witted opponent. Both men were elected to the Massachusetts Colonial Assembly the same year, and Paine was also a chosen delegate at the First and Second Continental Congresses debating independence from Britain. He rarely tabled suggestions, but gained the nickname 'Objection Maker', according to Benjamin Rush, for "opposing nearly every measure that was proposed".

His argumentative nature notwithstanding, he was sufficiently convinced to become one of Massachusetts' five signatories of the Declaration of Independence. He went on to serve as part of the committee that drafted the Massachusetts Constitution, and served on the Massachusetts Supreme Court until poor health prompted his retirement in 1804. Paine and Adams, despite their differences, remained firm friends for the rest of their lives.

William Whipple

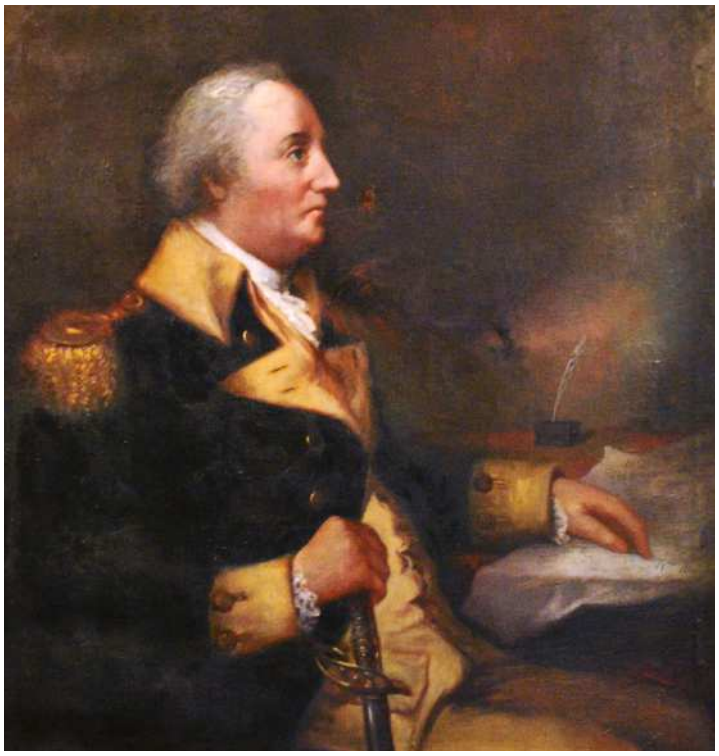
1730-1785

The militiaman mariner

Whipple was one of nine freemasons to sign the Declaration of Independence

William Whipple began his career at sea as a cabin boy, and ended it, aged just 30, as a ship's captain and a man of considerable wealth. With wealth comes power: by the time he was 45, he was as successful a merchant on land as he had been at sea, and had been elected to various political offices and, ultimately, the Continental Congress. Settled in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, he was one of three men from that state to sign the Declaration of Independence. Shortly afterwards, he became Brigadier General of the New Hampshire Militia, commanding the forces at Saratoga that stymied the British plans to separate New England from the rest of the continent. It was an important victory, demonstrating that the British could indeed be defeated.

He believed that all men are created equal, and recommended the forming of black military regiments as a foundation for emancipation. That said, he was still a slave owner, attended throughout the revolutionary campaign by the indentured Prince Whipple. He did, however, ultimately free Prince, after coming to the realisation that fighting for freedom while holding a man in bondage was, to say the least, a contradiction.



Edward Rutledge

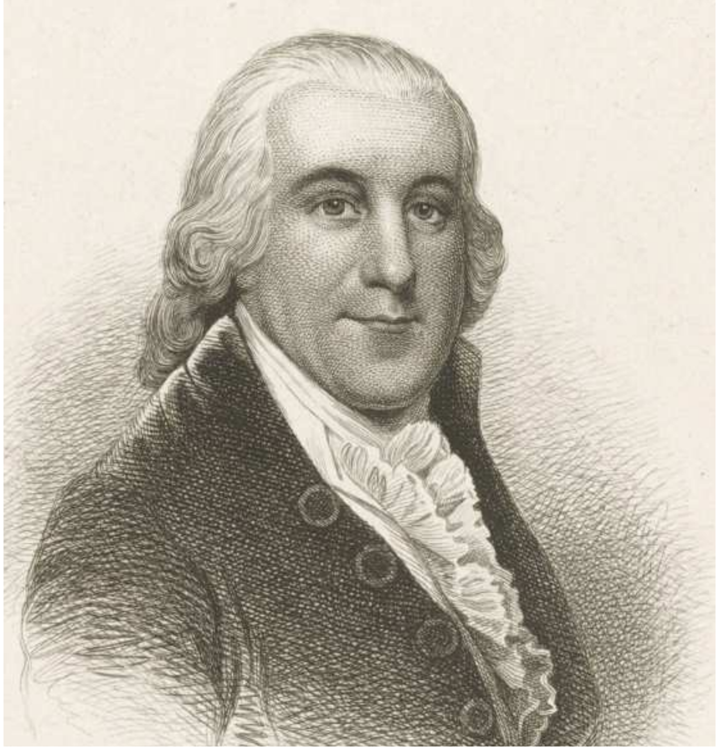
1749-1800

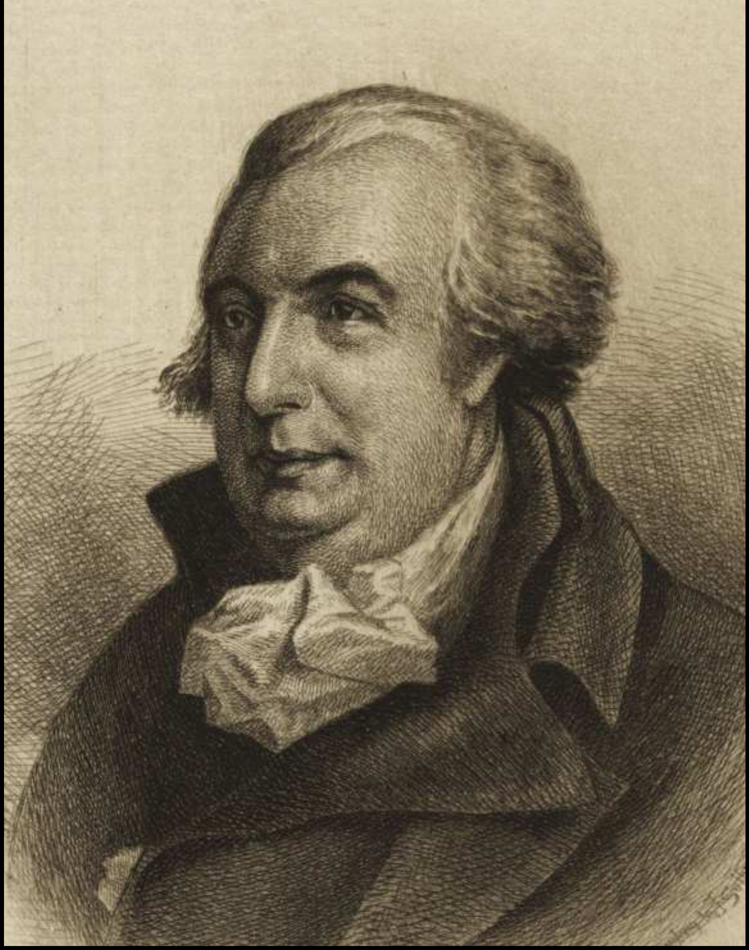
The youngest Founding Father

Rutledge owned more than 50 slaves and was a dogged opponent of emancipation

At 70, Benjamin Franklin was the oldest of the Founding Fathers to sign the Declaration of Independence. And at just 26, Charleston's Edward Rutledge was by some distance the youngest. By the time of the revolution, however, he was already a leading citizen of South Carolina, with a well-established and respected law practice. An obstructionist by reputation, he actually resisted breaking away from Britain for a time. South Carolina's representation in the Colonial Congress – of which Rutledge was part – initially voted against independence, with Rutledge espousing the belief that the colonies should first confederate and nurture foreign alliances before taking the plunge. But finding themselves in the minority, Rutledge and his delegation reneged in a second vote the next day, opting for independence with the majority.

In the war that followed, Rutledge served as a captain of artillery in the South Carolina militia, and was part of unsuccessful early peace negotiations with the British alongside Franklin and John Adams. He was captured at Charleston in 1780, and spent a year in prison until his release as part of a prisoner exchange. Post-war, he went on to the House of Representatives and the governorship of South Carolina.





Gouverneur Morris

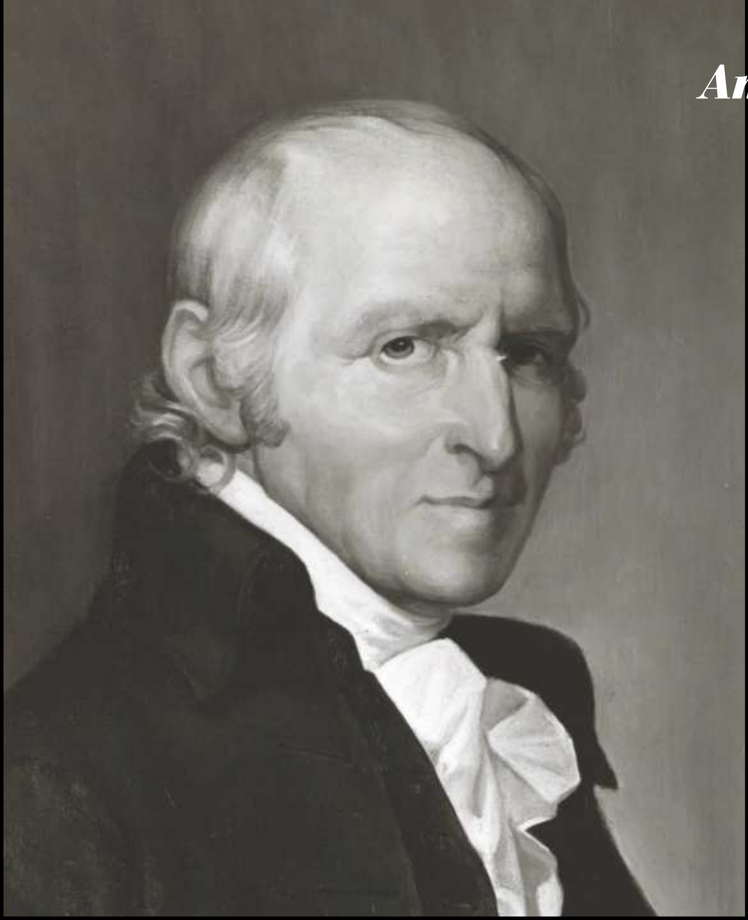
1752-1816

The penman of the Constitution

Both the town and village of Gouverneur in New York are named after Morris

Gouverneur Morris was a New Yorker, who gained the unofficial title 'penman of the Constitution' by writing its Preamble and contributing to its final draft. He advanced the notion of an independent America being a single union of united states; advocated strong central government and the importance of keeping an aristocracy; and spoke out loudly against the institution of slavery, arguing that people could not be property. In 1778, when members of the Continental Congress attempted a vote of no confidence against George Washington, his was the deciding vote that kept Washington in place as commander-in-chief. In his later career, he was chairman of the commission that helped transform New York into a financial hub.

His personal life was a colourful one. Through marriage to his wife Nancy, he inherited a plantation called Bizarre, and he enjoyed dalliances with several prominent women in post-revolutionary France during his two-year stint as minister plenipotentiary. He lost a leg, not in battle during the revolution, but as the result of a jump from a window to escape a jealous husband (although he claimed the amputation resulted from a carriage accident). He died at the age of 64 from injuries he sustained attempting self-surgery on a blockage in his urinary tract.



Timothy Pickering

1745-1829

The Native Americans' champion

Pickering was the third US Secretary of State under Washington and Adams

Born in Salem, Massachusetts, Timothy Pickering studied law at Harvard, but never practised, instead taking an interest in military strategy. He became colonel of the Essex County Militia in 1775, and was described by George Washington as a "great military genius", despite his role in the Revolutionary War being largely administrative. He became Quartermaster General in 1780. After the war, his legal training became useful after all, as he became involved with the Pennsylvania State Assembly, mediating land disputes between Pennsylvania and Connecticut claimants. And he represented Luzerne County at the 1787 convention where the Constitution was ratified.

Perhaps his most unsung contribution to American history, however, was his work settling treaties with Native Americans. His work conciliating with America's indigenous population earned him the position of Postmaster General, and he continued the work from that lofty position: for example, negotiating the Treaty of Canandaigua establishing peace and friendship between the United States and the Grand Council of the Six Nations. Sadly, he fell out of political favour in later years thanks to his switch to support of the British and his organisation of movements to secede from the Union. Denied further political office, he lived out the rest of his life back in Salem as a farmer.

Samuel Chase

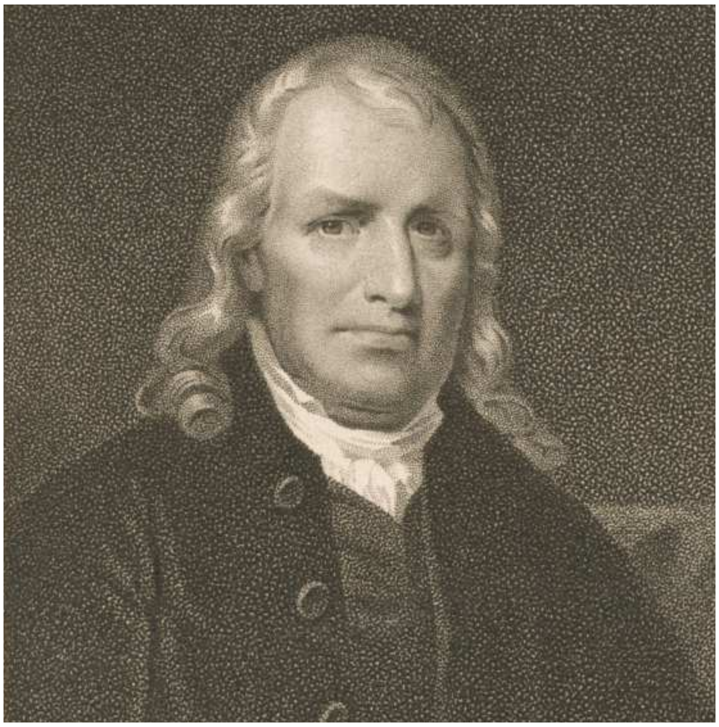
1741-1811

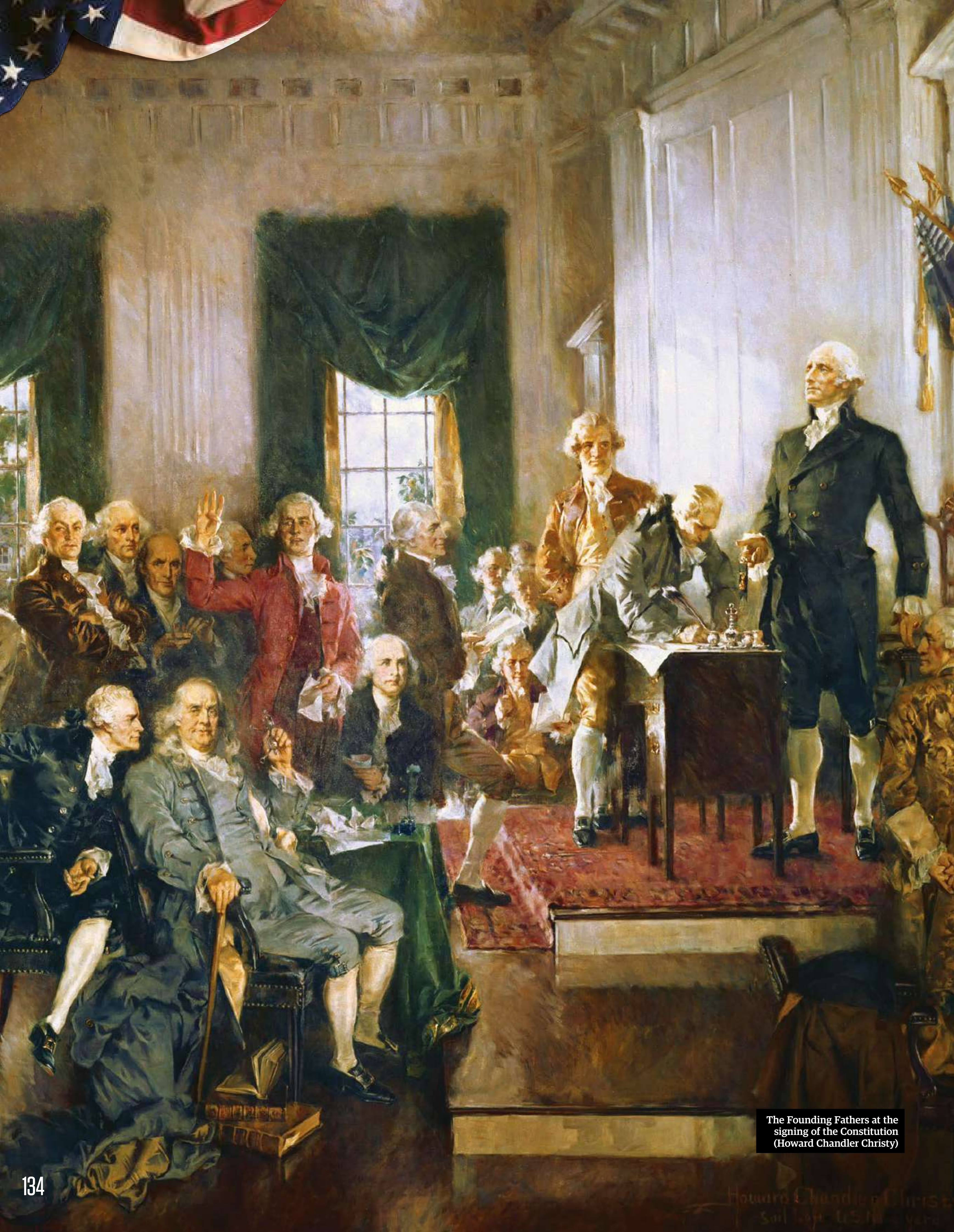
The impeached Founding Father

A 1766 magazine article called Chase "a foul-mouthed and inflaming son of discord"

Samuel Chase was a signatory to the Declaration of Independence as a representative of Maryland. It was a logical culmination of his long-standing opposition to the British Crown's colonial rule of America. He had previously led energetic opposition to the Stamp Act, and attended both Continental Congresses, where John Adams described him as "violent and boisterous" in debate. At least one delegate retired from Congress altogether after finding himself on the wrong side of Chase's furious arguments and the receiving end of his tirades.

His role in defeating several of George Washington's political opponents led to his selection for the Supreme Court in 1796, where he was instrumental in several important legal decisions, including one involving the definition of direct taxation. But he is most remembered for the controversy that saw him impeached: the only Supreme Court justice ever to have been so. 'The Hanging Judge', as the Republican press dubbed him, became infamous for several instances in which he let his political biases affect his court decisions, often digressing from the business at hand to let rip with his Federalist politics. He was, however, acquitted on all counts, thanks to some generous interpretations of the rulebook.




Howard Chandler Christy

The Founding Fathers at the signing of the Constitution (Howard Chandler Christy)

Controversies of the Founding Fathers

The Founding Fathers' achievements were extraordinary,but they weren't right about everything. On some issues, their judgement was lacking

The US Constitution, the first version of which was signed in 1787, begins with three words: "We the people." The definition of "people", however, was not understood to include the millions of African Americans suffering under the yoke of slavery.

Slavery

One of the great missed opportunities of the Founding Fathers' era was to make slavery a local rather than a national issue. While many of the Founders were in favour of emancipation, the opportunity to outlaw slavery from the centre of government was not taken, and the issue was instead left to be decided state-by-state on an individual basis.

The issue was so distorted because of the problem of slavery's importance to the American economy, and particularly those economies of the Southern states. Between 1790 and 1860 the harvesting of cotton in the Southern states grew from a thousand tonnes a year to a million, with slaves being the crucial labour force needed to bring in those crops. In 1790 there were over half a million slaves in the South. There were nearly 4 million by 1860. The importation of slaves actually became illegal in 1808, but the law went unenforced, meaning hundreds of thousands of slaves continued to be brought into the country, usually from Central and Western Africa. The system was so entrenched that only the Civil War could bring it to an end. 11 states would ultimately vote to secede from the Union, when abolitionist voices from the North began to get louder.

But even with the Confederacy's defeat in 1865, freed African Americans still faced prejudice and violence from the entrenched racism of the South. The so-called 'Black Codes' and Jim Crow segregationist laws of the subsequent decades can all arguably be traced back to the time when the Founding Fathers failed to make good on the claim that all America's citizens are equal under the law.

George Washington exploited legal loopholes that allowed him to keep slaves well after the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780

Native Americans

Similarly, and with few exceptions, the Founding Fathers did little to recognise the rights of Native Americans. While some tribes had been in favour of and fought towards the Founders' vision of a new, independent United States, others had remained loyal to the colonial British. In 1779, George Washington ordered punishment attacks on Native American villages, making no distinction between those who had been American allies and those who hadn't.

In 1787, the Constitution gave Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes", and Washington, while describing Native Americans as "like the wild beasts of the forest," advocated for the legal purchase of Indian land rather than its being taken by force. Various treatises were signed over the following years, but there remained an uneasy tension, with Native American issues being treated as matters of foreign policy in congress: the Native Americans were essentially always viewed by the European settlers as aliens in their own land.

As a federation of semi-independent allies, the organisation of the Iroquois Nation - comprising the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora tribes - was an obvious precedent for the government system the Founders would adopt (some have even called the flag of the Iroquois the "first draft of the Constitution"). But the Founders preferred to claim Ancient Greece and Rome as their inspirations.

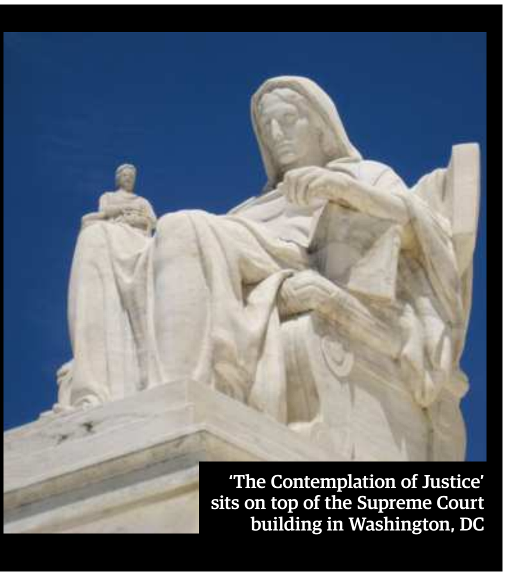
Washington, with apparent sincerity, assured the Cherokee in particular that all treatises would be

© Getty

The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court was established in 1789, pursuant to Article Three of the US Constitution establishing the judicial branch of the federal government. It was the only court specifically established by the Constitution, all others being created by Congress. Generally speaking, it is the final point on the journey of any piece of legislation that has made its way through the United States' legal system. It consists of the Chief Justice of the United States and eight other associate justices, nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Justices have a lifetime tenure unless they choose to resign, retire or are forcibly removed by the other members (which has never happened).

Each justice has one vote on the outcome of a case, and decisions must be unanimous. This means that there have been instances of laws that had been overwhelmingly enacted by huge margins in the House of Representatives and the Senate, failing at the Supreme Court's final hurdle by just a single vote. Literally hundreds of legislators may work on a case, but it's easily possible for a sole justice to overturn it. Many modernisers have suggested that such a situation, where a President's agenda, ratified by Congress, can be defeated by a lone recalcitrant voice, should no longer be tolerated, and that, for example, a two-thirds majority should be the minimum requirement for a Judicial Review.



'The Contemplation of Justice' sits on top of the Supreme Court building in Washington, DC

honoured in perpetuity, but ultimately his promise was not kept. By 1830, the numbers of white settlers desiring to move into Indian-occupied territory, and the clamour of their demands, prompted the US government to take drastic action in favour of its electorate. The solution arrived at under the presidency of Andrew Jackson was the Indian Removal Act, which uprooted five entire tribes from their lands in the Deep South of America and displaced them hundreds of kilometres to new territories further west. Thousands died without seeing the end point of their arduous and unjust journey. Only in 1924 were Native Americans judged automatically to be US Citizens without having to apply.

Women's suffrage

The Founding Fathers didn't specifically deny women the right to vote, but neither did they go out of their way to make that right enshrined in law. As with slavery, the issue was delegated from the centre to the individual states to decide for themselves. All decided that women were not eligible to be given public and political voice (New Jersey was briefly an exception, but changed its mind and revoked women's suffrage in 1807).

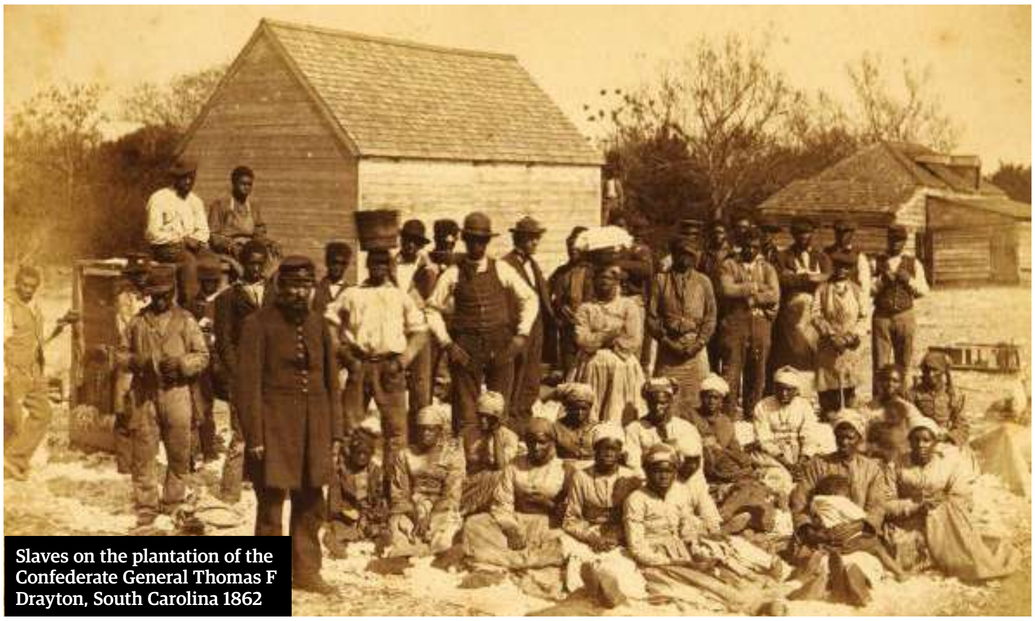
The first ten amendments to the Constitution, making up 1791's Bill of Rights, still did not address the issue. In the first half of the 19th century, most state legislatures saw suffrage bills introduced at one time or another, but few even came to a vote and most were simply disregarded. The 14th amendment of 1868, dealing with citizenship rights, was in much later years interpreted as giving women extensive rights, but was not read that way at the time (in fact the Supreme Court officially ruled that it should not be read that way in 1875). It was not until 1920 that the 19th Amendment made it unconstitutional and illegal to deny US citizens the right to vote on the basis of gender.

First introduced in Congress in 1878, it took 41 years for the 19th amendment to be made law throughout the United States: a period known as 'the doldrums', when the women's suffrage movement

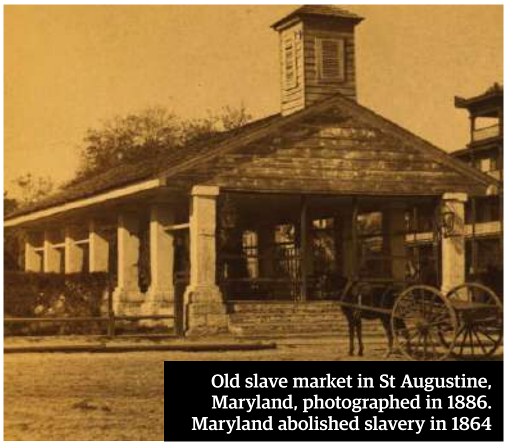
John Adams was the only president of America's first five that did not hold any slaves

HEADQUARTERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OPPOSED TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE

The Founders' failure to recognise women's rights exacerbated further years of oppression



Slaves on the plantation of the Confederate General Thomas F Drayton, South Carolina 1862



Old slave market in St Augustine, Maryland, photographed in 1886. Maryland abolished slavery in 1864

> "As with slavery, the issue was delegated from the centre to the individual states to decide for themselves"

The Founders enshrined the right to bear arms, which in 1793 looked like this musket

gained few victories. Even then, it was only ratified by the necessary 36 state legislatures. The 1920 Presidential Election was the first in which women in every state could legally vote, but it would be further decades before every US state officially ratified the amendment. Mississippi was the last holdout to bring its books up to date, incredibly, in 1984.

Guns

The right for American citizens to bear arms has been a slow burning but continuous source of controversy since its initial inclusion as the Constitution's Second Amendment in the 1791 Bill of Rights.

The pre-Bill of Rights draft of the Constitution had argued that the power to arm state militias should be moved from the individual states to the federal government. This immediately rang alarm bells among some of the Founders, who argued that the policy marked the start of a slippery downward slope towards government tyranny. As Noah Webster put it: "America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword [if] the whole body of the people are armed." Representatives of Southern states like Virginia, however, had more sinister motives for keeping guns in the hands of their constituents. 'Slave patrols' of white men keeping control of indentured African Americans would find it harder to do so if the organisation of local militias were eventually outlawed.

The Bill of Rights was, of course, eventually ratified, but debate has continued over the precise wording of the Second Amendment: specifically regarding whether it applies to American citizens' individual or collective rights. Many argued that its clause stating that "a well regulated militia [is] necessary to the security of a free state" means that the Second Amendment does not apply to individuals, and only recognises the right of each state to arm its own militia. A second interpretation has allowed for some individual rights, but only where that individual was an active participant in a state-organised militia.

But the third interpretation - simply that an individual has the right to own guns - was the ultimate resolution to the question, officially ruled on by the US Supreme Court as late as 2010. The issue of what kind of gun an individual has the right to own, however, is one that remains a hot topic of debate, especially today.

> George Washington's dentures were not wooden, as legend has it, but in part made from the real teeth of slaves

The Folding Money Conflict

To modern eyes, peculiar controversy of the Founding Fathers was their initial antipathy towards paper money. George Washington's face may adorn the one dollar bill, but until as late as 1791 the printing of money was regarded as a dangerous path towards crippling inflation. The first article of the Constitution prohibited the states from emitting bills of credit or accepting anything but gold or silver as tender in payments of debts. Even the generally reliable John Adams believed that "every dollar of a bank bill that is issued beyond the quantity of gold or silver in the vaults represents nothing and is therefore a cheat upon somebody."

The individual states got around this prohibition by each chartering their own banks and printing their own money. This enabled the swift expansion of the US economy in the early 19th century, but also caused the very problems that the Founders had tried so hard to guard against: millions of dollars worth of notes multiplied and duplicated and mixed with each other while crossing state lines, without the reserves of gold or silver to underwrite them.

The issue was eventually resolved only when Alexander Hamilton intervened and created The President, Directors and Company of the Bank of the United States - aka The First Bank of the United States - to monopolise the issuance of currency and restore order to the chaotic non-system. Opponents such as Thomas Jefferson and others argued that the bank was unconstitutional, but Hamilton ultimately convinced President Washington to sign the bill into law, for a chartered term of 20 years.

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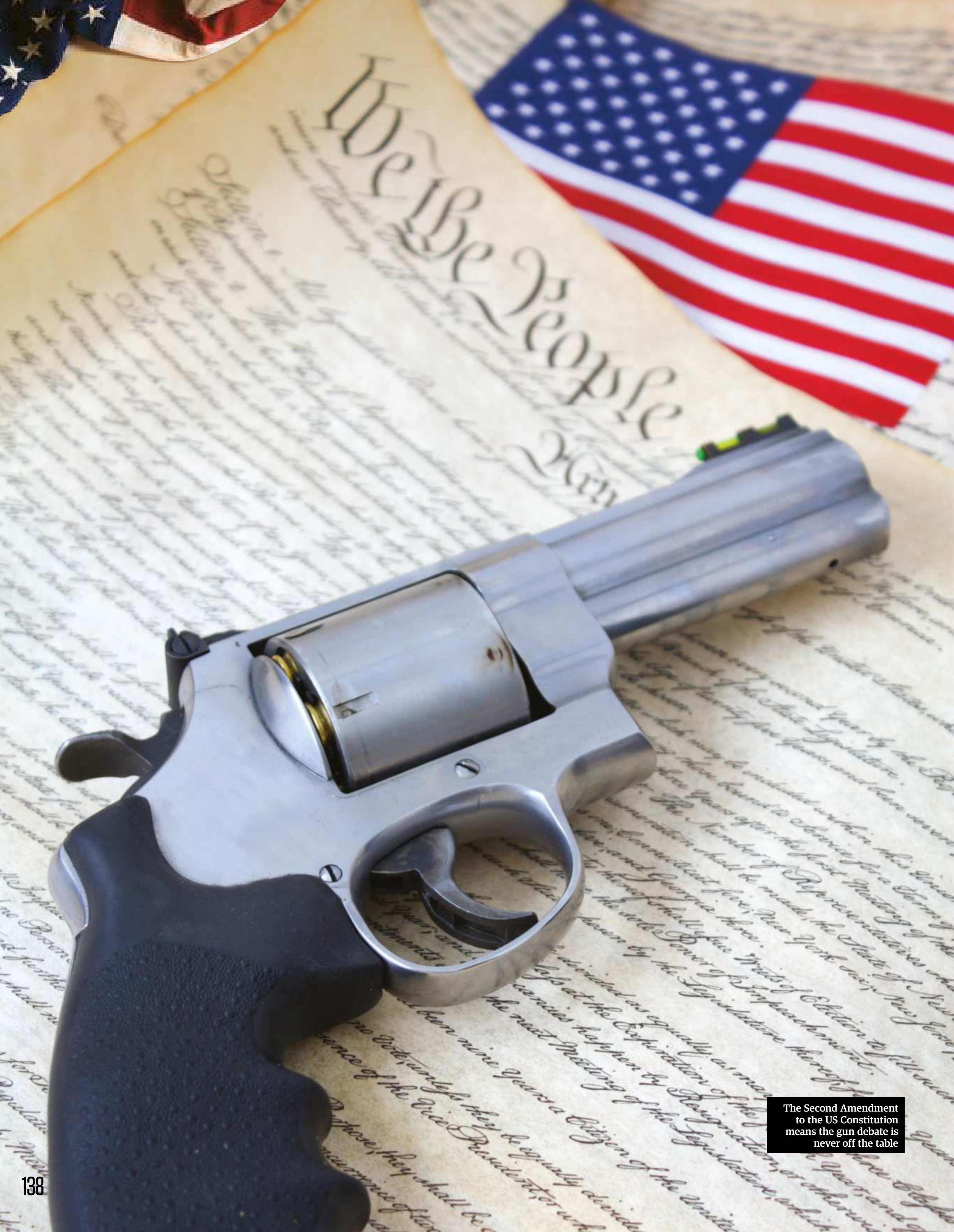


The Second Amendment to the US Constitution means the gun debate is never off the table

The amendment locked in controversy

Even while signing the Constitution, certain Founding Fathers were seeking amendments to it. The debate over the Second, echoing down the centuries, remains deeply polarising

To date, there have been 27 ratified amendments to the US Constitution. By a curious coincidence, one of them - the Second - actually consists of 27 words. As capitalised by the Founding Fathers who composed it, those words are:

"A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

More than two-and-a-quarter centuries after those words were formulated, the arguments in the US over firearms and whether or not they can or should be restricted rage on. Even in the country that sees more than 30,000 deaths per year from the accidental or deliberate misuse of pistols, revolvers, rifles and shotguns, the gun control debate is not going to be resolved any time soon because of what it says in the Constitution.

The Second Amendment, along with nine others, formed what were collectively known as the Bill of Rights. Principally drafted by the Founding Father James Madison, they were ratified as part of the Constitution in 1791. Madison had recognised and responded to the concerns of the anti-Federalists, who felt the Constitution in its original form gave too much power to the federal government and lacked guarantees of rights and freedoms for individual citizens.

The concept of an armed citizenry, however, was viewed at the time as less of a right and more of a necessity. When colonist settlers began arriving in great numbers, they brought with them weapons for defence and protection, but also the backing of the English Bill of Rights of 1689 which, if circumstances dictated, allowed for the weaponised Protestant population to form a militia should the sovereignty of parliament come under any threat from a tyrannical monarch.

> According to national surveys, about a quarter of the adult population in America owns a gun

This inherited notion of a citizen's militia, necessarily armed to be effective, and seen as the answer if nationhood came under threat, was put to the test during the War of Independence. It was, after all, the British Army's attempt to confiscate weapons from the population at Concord near Boston which gave rise to the first engagement at Lexington Green and "the shot heard round the world", which began the conflict in 1775. While Washington's creation of a more regular force in the Continental Army - and the intervention of the French - ultimately proved decisive, the availability of an armed populace willing to fight was also highly significant.

The framers of the Constitution and its first set of amendments had witnessed what an armed citizenry could do. At the same time, there was a deep mistrust of maintaining a standing army, which could be marshalled by an over-reaching government veering towards unjust rule. The natural check on a wayward and desperate administration morphing into an enemy of the people was for the population to rise up and overthrow it. For that, they would need arms. The Second Amendment, therefore, made logical, perfect sense… in 1791.

To the pro-gun lobby in the United States, it still makes logical, perfect sense today. This assessment

© Getty

is based on the interpretation of what the Second Amendment really covers according to gun-rights activists. Their belief is that it is an 'individual right' guarantee to allow citizens to possess arms for their own self-defence and regardless of any militia service.

Others, however, argue that the Second Amendment is a protection of something else entirely. The 'collective right' theory holds that it was designed to protect the right of the separate states to form militia of armed citizens for the common defence, not only against any potential invading force, but also the federal government should it become threatening.

A third interpretation is described as a 'sophisticated collective right'. In this version, there is a protection of an individual right to keep and bear arms linked expressly to a collective responsibility of common defence - in other words, the right to possess arms regarded as unsuitable for militia service is not protected.

The debate between commentators, historians and scholars over which interpretive assessment is correct has rumbled on for centuries. Proponents of each theory have sought to influence the court of public opinion, yet as it happens, there is only one court that counts in determining what the Constitution means - the Supreme Court.

Despite all the conflicting opinions, for many years the Court's actual considerations of the Second Amendment were quite scarce. Its initial rulings, all from the 19th century, merely dealt with whether the amendment was binding on entities other than the federal government. It was not until 1939, and the case of the United States vs Miller, that the Court was charged with making a decision on whether the Second Amendment protected an 'individual' or 'collective' right.

In attempts to curtail the rise of mob and gangster violence in the late-1920s and early-1930s, several pieces of important gun control legislation had been passed into law. The National Firearms Act of 1934 required firearms to be registered and taxed, at a rate considered prohibitively high, while the 1938 Federal Firearms Act sought to prevent anyone from selling or shipping firearms without a licence issued by the US Department of Commerce. A known bank robber, Jack Miller,

> Jack Miller, whose 'right to arms' case went to the Supreme Court, was found shot to death before the Court ruling

The Stoneman Douglas High School mass shooting in February 2018 led to huge student demonstrations demanding tougher gun control

James Brady, with President Clinton. Brady, left paralysed after the attempted President Reagan assassination, campaigned for common-sense gun reforms

Timeline

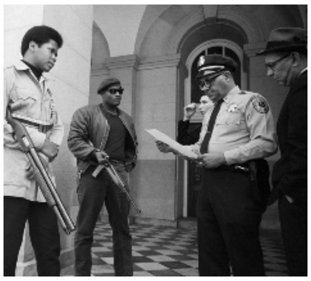
The Bill of Rights
To appease anti-Federalists unhappy with the Constitution as it stands, amendments are proposed. Ten are ratified, collectively labelled the Bill of Rights. The Second is to become hugely controversial in the years to come.
15 December 1791

The NRA is formed
Veterans from the Civil War dismayed by poor marksmanship in the conflict create the National Rifle Association to promote gun craft via ranges and shooting competitions.
17 November 1871

Gun control, second attempt
Further legislation is introduced in the Federal Firearms Act. Gun manufacturers, importers and dealers must obtain a federal licence and keep customer records. Also, convicted felons are prohibited from purchasing guns.
30 June 1938

The Second Amendment is tested
The United States vs Miller comes before the Supreme Court. The unanimous ruling is that the amendment gives individuals no protection from gun control measures. The right to arms is 'collective', rooted in militia service.
15 May 1939

The Mulford Act
When Black Panther members openly carry arms for protection, Don Mulford of California's assembly swiftly champions a bill repealing the law that allows open carrying of loaded firearms. The NRA supports the restriction.
28 July 1967



1791

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Defining moment
Gun control, first attempt
26 June 1934

In response to violent crime around the alcohol prohibition era, and also an assassination attempt on president-elect Franklin D Roosevelt, Congress passes the National Firearms Act. It requires gun registration and places restrictive taxes on the manufacture, sales and transfer of fully automatic weapons. Originally, the Act includes a proposal for handguns to be registered nationally too, but this is dropped before the act becomes law. The purpose of the tax is to discourage transactions of these weapons rather than to raise revenue.

Defining moment
New raft of gun controls
22 Oct 1968

A wave of assassinations, rising crime rates and civil unrest leads President Johnson to push for greater gun control. He aims to introduce a national registration system for all guns. In the end, the measures in the Gun Control Act fall short of that target. It does, however, prohibit interstate sales of guns except via licensed manufacturers and dealers. The categories of those prohibited from buying or possessing firearms are also extended to include convicted felons, the mentally ill and unlawful drug users.

The NRA: Lethal lobbyists

The shooting accuracy of Union soldiers in the American Civil War, when they were firing about 1,000 rifle shots to land one Confederate hit, was clearly lamentable. Colonel William Conant Church and Captain George Wood Wingate were two veterans of the conflict determined to improve matters. They formed the National Rifle Association in 1871. Its aim at the time, and for the next six decades, was to teach and improve marksmanship among its membership.

With federal gun laws coming into force in the 1930s, the NRA opened a Legislative Affairs Division to keep members informed and updated about firearms controls. Apart from that, the NRA generally steered clear of gun-control issues, preferring to promote hunting and recreational shooting instead, until the mid-1970s.

The Gun Control Act of 1968, however, angered sections of its membership. A lobbying arm, the Institute for Legislative Action, was formed to begin influencing politicians. The 1977 NRA annual convention was a major turning point, when more strident gun rights activists championing Second Amendment rights ousted the former leadership in what became known as the Cincinnati Revolution.

Ever since, the organisation's political influence has grown. Claiming membership of more than five million, it rates every congress member and every candidate on their gun rights stance, promoting those who are 'on message' and downgrading those who aren't.

Likewise, its financial firepower pays for TV advertisements to praise or pummel politicians it likes or dislikes. Given such activity, it is unsurprisingly regarded by many commentators as the most powerful lobbying organisation in the country.

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
E PLURIBUS UNUM
INCORPORATED
1871

Formed six years after the Civil War ended, the National Rifle Association claims to be "America's longest standing civil rights organisation"

and an associate were charged with transporting an unregistered sawn-off shotgun across state lines. The defendants challenged the prosecution, claiming an unconstitutional violation of the Second Amendment.

The Supreme Court ruled unanimously as follows: "In the absence of any evidence tending to show that possession or use of a 'shotgun having a barrel of less than 18 inches in length' at this time has some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia, we cannot say that the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear such an instrument." Effectively then, as the weapon was ruled to be not part of ordinary military equipment able to contribute to the common defence, and was therefore subject to gun-control laws, the protection afforded by the Second Amendment was to the collective right to keep and bear arms in relation to militia service.

For the rest of the century, that view prevailed. During the 1960s, meanwhile, the assassinations of President John F Kennedy, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr, and Senator Robert Kennedy, prompted a number of stricter gun-control laws. The Gun Control Act of 1968 prevented the sale of shotguns and rifles via mail order - the method by which Lee Harvey Oswald acquired the weapon to shoot at President Kennedy - and banned people such as convicted criminals, drug users, and those deemed mentally incompetent from buying or possessing guns. A further assassination attempt, on President Ronald Reagan in 1981, also heralded additional gun-control measures in the form of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, passed by Congress in 1993. James Brady was President Reagan's press secretary at the time of the assassination attempt. He took a bullet to the head and was left partially paralysed. The act in his name required federally licensed gun dealers (though not private sellers) to discover through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System operated by the FBI if anyone seeking to buy a handgun was barred from purchasing one. It

There is a 'Second Amendment Day' in some states in America, though different states observe it on different days

- **Enforcement gets its own agency**
  Within the US Department of Justice, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is created to more vigorously enforce federal gun-control laws. (Subsequently renamed the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.)
  1 July 1972

BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES
1972

- **District Of Columbia bans handguns**
  The Firearms Control Regulations Act, which – with some exceptions – effectively bans handguns from the nation's capital, comes into force. It aims to reduce gun crime and monitor trafficking of firearms.
  24 September 1976

- **The Cincinnati Revolt**
  Harlon Carter and his followers gain control of the National Rifle Association. The old guard, seen as merely interested in hunting and marksmanship, is replaced by much more politicised gun activists.
  21 May 1977

- **NRA-approved gun reform**
  President Reagan's Firearms Owners' Protection Act revises many restrictions of the 1968 Gun Control Act. While it adds to the categories of persons prohibited from owning firearms, gun activists claim it is a victory.
  19 May 1986

- **Campaign for common-sense gun laws**
  Injured after the assassination attempt on Reagan, James Brady and wife Sarah advocate common-sense gun laws. The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act requires firearms dealers to make background checks before selling to would-be buyers.
  30 November 1993

Defining moment

DC's handgun ban declared unconstitutional 26 June 2008

In a landmark five-to-four majority decision, the Supreme Court finds the capital's handgun ban violates the Second Amendment. Overturning previous rulings, the Court concludes the amendment means individuals have the right to keep and bear arms regardless of militia service. Justice Scalia adds this is not an unlimited right, however, insisting: "It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose." Two years later, a second Court judgement declares the revised protections of the Second Amendment are incorporated at state level because of the 14th Amendment.

- **Mass shootings continue**
  The 2012 Sandy Hook atrocity is followed by America's worst ever gun tragedy. In Las Vegas, 58 people are killed and hundreds injured by a gunman using semi-automatic rifles fitted with bump fire stock mechanisms.
  1 October 2017

originally provided for a waiting period too, though that ceased when an instant telephone checking system was introduced.

The escalation of gun violence in the latter half of the 20th century brought forth further legislation specific to local areas, too. For example, in the nation's capital, Washington, DC, the Firearms Control Regulations Act became law in 1976. This Act banned residents from owning handguns and certain other firearms, though there were exemptions for police officers and weapons owned before the law came into force. The Act also required guns kept in the home to be "unloaded, disassembled, or bound by a trigger lock or similar device".

Robert Levy, a lawyer and constitutional scholar who doubted that act's legality, sought out plaintiffs to challenge it on Second Amendment grounds. With Levy financing the case himself, he unearthed Dick Heller, a special police officer in the capital, who was armed for his job in federal office buildings, but was not allowed to keep a gun at home. Following hearings and appeals in lower courts, the case finally came before the highest court in the land in 2008 to once again determine what the Founding Fathers had intended the Second Amendment to mean.

> "The case came before the highest court in the land to once again determine what the Founding Fathers had intended the Second Amendment to mean"

The case District of Columbia vs Heller delivered a landmark ruling from the Supreme Court. By a majority of five to four, the Court ruled that the Second Amendment actually did protect an individual's right to keep a firearm for the purpose of self-defence. The 'collective rights' view of the amendment, which had held sway for so long, was overturned in favour of the 'individual rights' argument.

Writing on behalf of the majority, Justice Antonin Scalia revealed the Court concluded that, because the framers of the Constitution understood the right of self-defence to be "the central component" of the right to keep and bear arms, the Second Amendment implicitly protects the right "to use arms in defence of hearth and home". Consequently, it was the court's view that the sweeping ban on functional guns in places of residence went too far. Because of the inherent right of self-defence, Scalia continued, the "handgun ban amounts to the prohibition of an entire class of 'arms' that is overwhelmingly chosen by American society of that purpose. The prohibition extends, moreover, to the home, where the need for defence of self, family and property is most acute". While Scalia acknowledged that some believed gun bans would reduce violence - the reason for the ban in the first place - he nevertheless concluded that "the enshrinement of constitutional rights necessarily takes certain policy choices off the table".

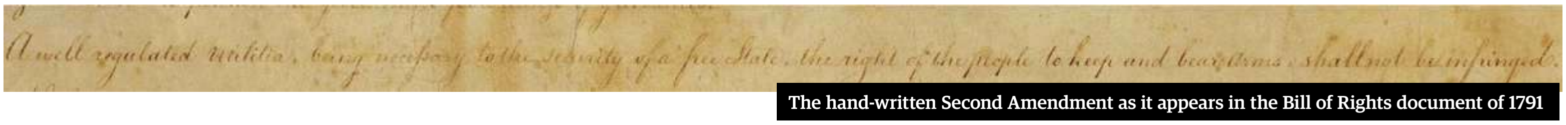
Though proposed in the 1791 Bill of Rights, one modification to the Constitution was only ratified as the 27th Amendment in 1992

Needless to say, the decision was controversial, even among members of the Court itself. It was, after all, delivered by the narrowest possible majority. Writing for the four-justice minority, Justice John Paul Stevens countered that the majority had relied upon a "strained and unpersuasive reading" of the amendment to adopt a view of history largely rejected by professional historians and, for over a century, the Court itself. By doing so, the Court was attempting to "denigrate" the importance of the amendment's preamble clause by ignoring its relationship to the second operative clause.

Stevens added that the decision "fails to identify any new evidence supporting the view that the Amendment was intended to limit the power of Congress to regulate civilian uses of weapons," and at the same time it overturned considerable longstanding judicial precedent. There was further dissent from the majority decision by

Mob violence, such as the St Valentine's Day massacre in 1929, led to gun control measures in the 1930s

The Supreme Court building in Washington, where the landmark Second Amendment ruling on District of Columbia vs Heller was delivered



A well regulated militia, being neceſsary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

The hand-written Second Amendment as it appears in the Bill of Rights document of 1791

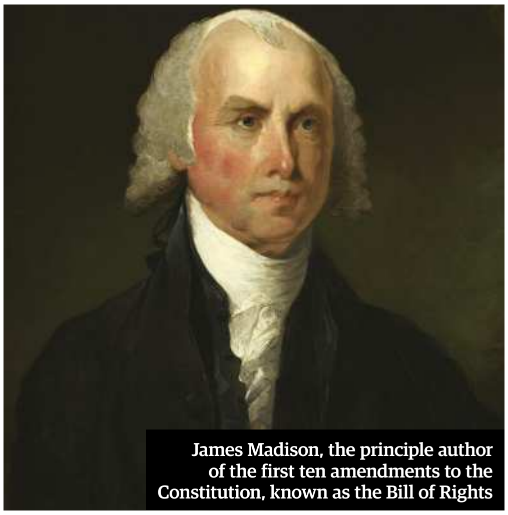
Justice Stephen Breyer, too. Writing separately from Stevens, he pointed to early fire-safety laws forbidding the storage of gunpowder, and early nuisance laws for imprudent weapon usage resulting in fines or confiscation of arms, to demonstrate that the Second Amendment had clearly been understood to have no impact on the regulation of civilian firearms at all.

While the Heller case delivered a ruling regarding the national capital's law, there were uncertainties with regards to the scope of gun rights at the state level. These were resolved two years later in 2010, when the case McDonald vs City of Chicago came before the Supreme Court.

Its verdict, once again by a majority of five to four, was that contrary to earlier rulings suggesting that the Second Amendment was intended to constrain Congress only, the Court now held that individual states also had to adhere to the constitutional right to keep and bear arms as per the Heller ruling. This was because of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution - one of the post-Civil War Amendments of 1868 - which allowed for elements of the Bill of Rights to be incorporated into state law.

As with the Heller case, Justice Stevens dissented. The marked absence of gun violence in other advanced democracies with far stricter firearms laws than the United States "undercuts the notion that an expansive gun right to keep and bear arms is intrinsic to ordered liberty", he reasoned. Regardless of that opinion, two seismic Supreme Court rulings in as many years had shifted the debate decisively in favour of the pro-gun lobby. They had campaigned vociferously that no matter what words the Founding Fathers had used in the preamble of the Second Amendment, it was the last 14 words that were important. And even in the wake of a mass shooting event as shocking, devastating and abhorrent as at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, when 20 children who were seven years old or under, along with six teachers, were slain, it is the view that still prevails in the country today.

> Currently, the only other countries with a constitutional right to bear arms are Guatemala and Mexico



James Madison, the principle author of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights

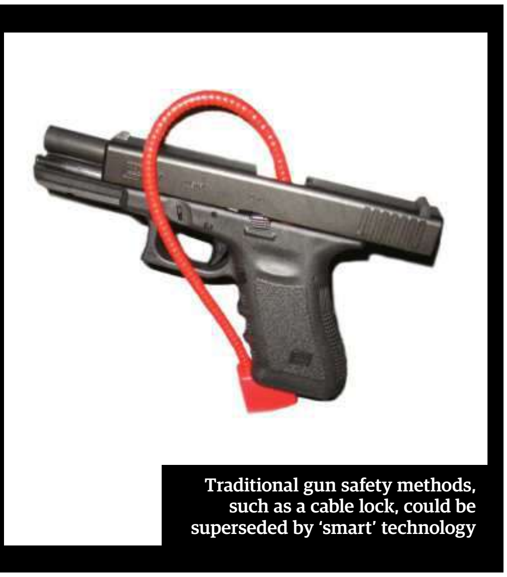
Mary Moorman's photo of the Kennedy assassination, one of several in the 1960s which triggered tighter gun controls

Can technology reduce gun violence?

The prevailing interpretation of the Second Amendment means that the firearms genie is fully out of the bottle and guns in the US are not going away anytime soon. That doesn't prevent attempts to limit needless gun violence, however. One avenue that may offer hope of balancing gun rights with greater public safety is technology.

'Smart guns' are being developed which prevent a weapon being fired by anyone other than its owner. One option is for fingerprint or other biometric recognition to occur before a gun can be activated. Another is for the owner to have a radio frequency identification unit, so that without the RF signal the gun remains locked. The obvious advantages are that stolen guns would be rendered useless, wayward teenagers or suicidal family members would not be able to 'borrow' and fire weapons owned by others at home, and toddlers would not be able to trigger loaded handguns discovered while playing. Similarly, the risk of law-enforcement officers being robbed of their weapons, with those weapons then being used against them, would diminish.

On the negative side, costs would be an issue, while there is resistance from some because of fears that whatever the technology, it might fail at a vital moment. Nevertheless, if gun rights are about guaranteeing safety, seeking out the safest guns for all makes undeniable sense.



Traditional gun safety methods, such as a cable lock, could be superseded by 'smart' technology

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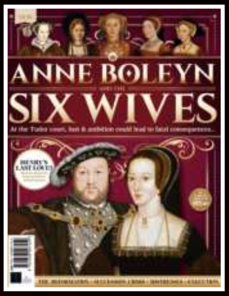
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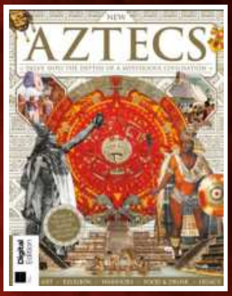

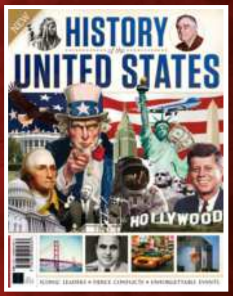
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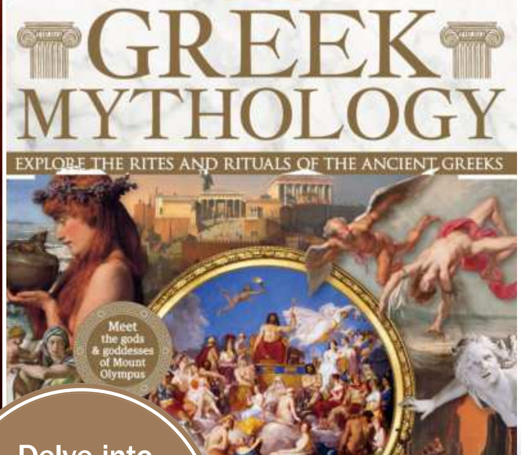
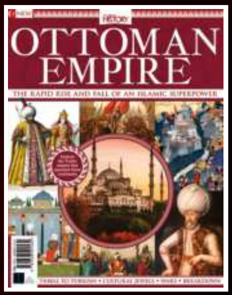
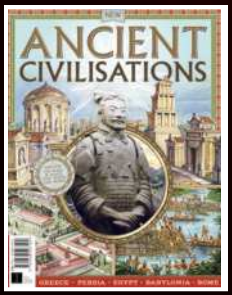

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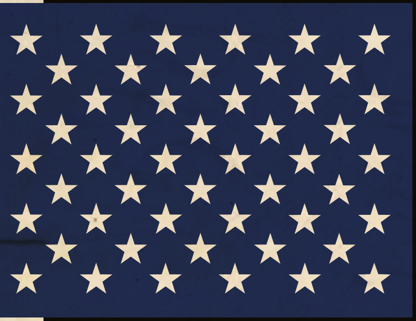

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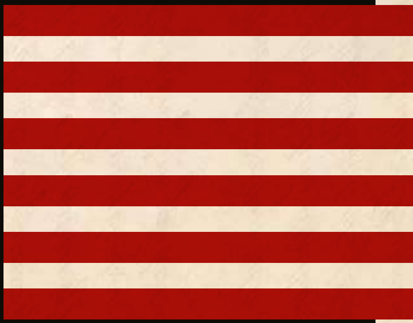

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CONGRESS. July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

The Declaration of Independence

July 1776

The Declaration of Independence

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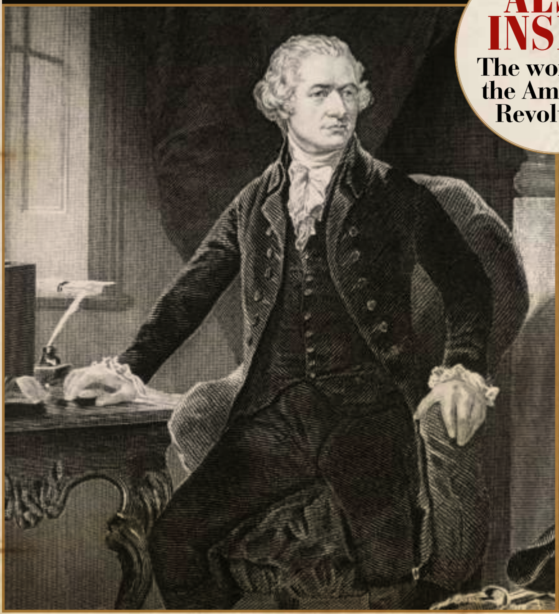

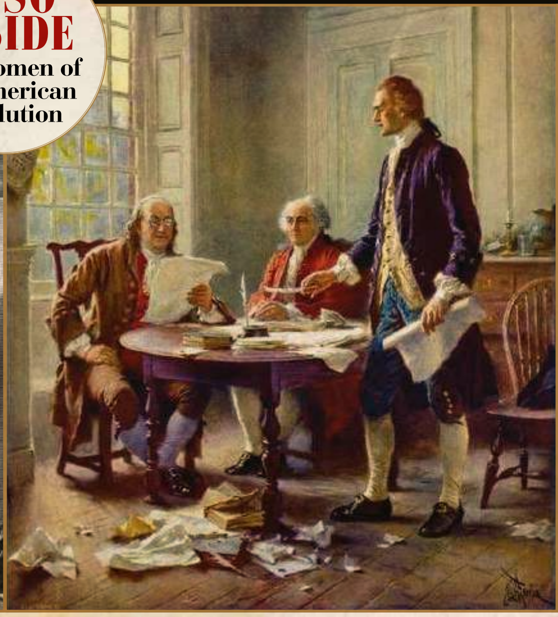

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